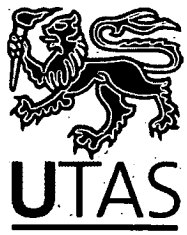

What does good visual art teaching look like? A case study of the perceptions of four visual art teacher educators in a Malaysian higher education setting.

By

Md. Nasir Ibrahim

M.A., B.A. (Hons.), Art Teachers' Diploma,
Diploma in Management, Certificate in Principalship.

A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

University of Tasmania

December, 2009

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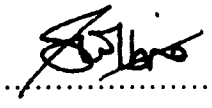

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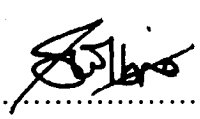

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the perceptions of four visual art teacher educators of what constitutes good visual art teaching in a Malaysian higher education setting. The aim of this study is to deepen our understanding of the characteristic features of good visual art teaching in a higher education setting. The study explores the beliefs, values, and life shaping factors that underpin and inform the teaching practice of these visual art teacher educators.

What constitutes good visual teaching in higher education has intrigued and challenged those concerned with this sector for many decades and is subject to on-going inquiry and debate. Perspectives of what constitutes good visual art teaching practices are shaped by individual, social and cultural factors, including those pathways taken through visual art education and training. Consequently there is little consensus about what good visual art teaching really looks like. Whilst the characteristic features of good teaching in higher education have been the subject of recent inquiry, the literature concerning good visual art teaching in higher education is limited. This study aims to address this gap.

This study adopts a qualitative case study approach and draws on the principles and practices of narrative inquiry. In this study, four visual art teacher educators who have different backgrounds and areas of specialisation from the Art Department of the 'University of Education Malaysia' were interviewed and observed. Each visual art teacher educator participated in a series of three

interviews in order to interrogate their beliefs, values and experiences, and access their accounts of good visual art teaching. Observations of each visual art teacher educator's teaching served to triangulate the data generated through interview. In order to obtain a better understanding of the phenomenon, 12 student teachers consisting of six pre-service and six in-service final year student teachers from the same department were interviewed using individual and group interview.

Narrative analysis and analysis of narrative techniques were employed in the examination of the data. From this analysis four narrative accounts of these visual art teacher educators' perception of good visual art teaching in a higher education setting were developed.

Findings suggest that teaching is shaped by prior experiences as learners in school, community, and tertiary settings, and understandings of the professional teaching situation. For these participants the personal and professional are connected in their lives. This connection is illustrated through the distinctive ways that each visual art teacher educator approaches their teaching and the different beliefs and values they hold. For those participants whose education and/or current practice is studio-based, mastery of art skills and knowledge is of primary importance in good visual art teaching. For these participants good visual art teaching is a specialised area which requires specific knowledge and skills. For those participants whose education and/or current practice is theory based, good visual art teaching is not only about mastery of art skills and knowledge but also involves mastery of pedagogical content knowledge and practical knowledge. Despite these apparent differences in beliefs and practices, concern for pedagogical content knowledge is a feature of the work of all four participants. For all visual art teacher educator participants, lifelong learning through self-reflection, inquiry, peer reviewing, involvement in on-going professional development and continuing education is

a hallmark of good visual art teaching. In addition all visual art teacher educator participants view good visual art teaching as a relational activity.

This study provides us with insights into the complexity of good visual art teaching from the perspective of the visual art teacher educator. This study has developed ways to listen to visual art teacher educators' voices and to hear them in their own terms, to observe them, to enter their realities, and to see the world from their perspectives. This is deemed as important because in the Malaysian experience, more often than not, visual art teacher educators' teaching practice and their lives have been largely unexamined and taken for granted. The worldviews, stories, and teaching practices we enact are cultural constructions that have become part of the fabric of our everyday lives. Through this study an understanding of the beliefs, values and life-shaping factors that underpin and inform these visual art teacher educators' teaching practices provides us with new understandings of their work in Malaysian teacher education.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Second, I would like to thank Dr. Margaret Baguley for the time and energy she has devoted to my study. As my co-supervisor, she has helped me in many ways.

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Fourth, my special thank to my University and the Ministry of Higher Education for sponsoring me to undertake my PhD.

Finally, I thank all my friends and colleagues who offered support, advice and demonstrated unquestioning faith in my ability to complete this dissertation. In particular, I thank Tammy Jones, Christine Gardner, Bruce Pietsch and Marilyn Pietsch for sharing their thoughts with me.

Most importantly I thank my family, my wife, Azlina, and my children Diana, Anzalna, Amira, Afifah, and Nazirah for their unconditional acceptance and understanding of my journey and their absolute support through my highs and lows.

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Prologue

This thesis arose from my professional practice. In my work as a visual art teacher educator in the University of Education Malaysia (UoEM)[1] I saw differences in the ways in which fellow visual art teacher educators perceived good visual art teaching practices.

"When I teach, I want my students to master their art skills and knowledge," said one visual art teacher educator. He continued, "As a visual art teacher, my students need to have these skills and knowledge so that when they teach, they know what they're doing. An art teacher without extensive art skills and knowledge is worthless and people will mock him or her for their lack of this ability. Therefore it's my duty to equip them with proper art skills and knowledge."

Another visual art teacher educator added, "Yes, that's true. In school, anything to do with art is always referred to the art teachers. The art teachers need to know not only fine art skills but also design skills and other artistic skills. Most of the tasks given are sometimes not learned at all in the college or university such as decoration using Styrofoam or silkscreen printing. But the art teachers are required to fulfil the tasks. They're expected to know anything related to art and design. This is where the basic art skills and knowledge they learned help them with these tasks."

In another situation, a visual art teacher educator said, "Well, we can always talk about the need for skills and knowledge of art but without pedagogical knowledge and skills, all the art skills and knowledge are worthless. A good artist doesn't make a good teacher."

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[1] Pseudonym.

During teaching practicum and post practicum I heard complaints about student teachers' performances, "We've got problems regarding our students. More often than not feedback from schools where our student teachers did their practicum reports their weaknesses in many areas which include visual art knowledge and skills, pedagogical content knowledge, classroom management, and practical knowledge."

These fragments of perceptions of good visual art teaching in higher education indicate some of the complexities involved in visual art teaching. I began this project believing that we are all part of a great unfolding story. The desire to understand how visual art teacher educators perceive good visual art teaching in higher education and whether their beliefs influence their teaching practice became the aim of this research. The understanding gained from this research will inform my practice, and perhaps that of other visual art teacher educators. It will also contribute to my understanding and improvement of my visual art teaching practice.

Chapter One: Introduction

This study seeks to understand four visual art teacher educators' perceptions of good visual art teaching in a higher education setting in Malaysia. All four visual art teacher educators possess different degrees of content knowledge—studio-based and/or theory-based. All the participants have spent many years immersed in their respective disciplines and have been teaching in higher education for more than five years. Together, with their experiences, their beliefs and values constitute a perspective on teaching that they bring with them to teacher education.

A perspective on visual art teaching is an interrelated set of beliefs and actions linked to knowledge, learning, and perceptions of the role of visual art teacher educators. It is a lens through which they view their work. They may not be aware of their perspective because it is something they look through, rather than at, when teaching (Jarvis-Selinger, Collins, & Pratt, 2007, p. 69). Thus, the perceptions of visual art teacher educators in this study not only provide direction and justification for what one does as a visual art teacher educator, but they also form the epistemic basis for normative roles and expectations regarding acceptable forms of teaching. Whether perspectives are justified or even reflected upon, they nevertheless influence what is adopted, what is adapted, and what is rejected when visual art teacher educators engage in their teacher education programs.

Specifically the aim of this study is to elicit participants' beliefs, values, and accounts of what good visual art teaching looks like. It endeavours to gain a better understanding of the practice of visual art teacher education from these participants' perspectives and tries to capture the meanings and understandings that they use as a basis for their teaching practice. As such, this research allows

us to gain a better understanding of the visual art teacher educators and their beliefs through the accounts they provide. This study is not intended to evaluate these visual art teacher educators' practice according to a set of predetermined criteria of what constitutes good visual art teaching and neither is it an assessment of the knowledge they have about teaching art education. Rather, it seeks to uncover some of the issues that characterise approaches to visual art teaching in higher education. Since good visual art teaching is closely related to the visual art teacher educators themselves, this study explores their past and current experiences to better understand their beliefs, values, and teaching practice.

This study adopts a qualitative case study approach and draws on the principles and practices of narrative inquiry. Each case is reported as a narrative account of the primary participants' beliefs, values, and practices. The study draws on detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple methods and sources of information which includes Seidman's (1998) three-phase interview approach (visual art teacher educators), small group interview (student teachers), individual interview (student teachers), and observation (visual art teacher educators), thus providing the opportunity to understand the complexities and diversities of visual art teacher educators' teaching practices and the personal meanings they attach to their teaching.

Groundwater-Smith, Ewing, and Cornu (2003) state, "It is not only a matter of learning from our histories but also actually making our own histories cases for critical discussion" (p. 155). They suggest that all teachers have been influenced at some stage or another by their personal histories, and ongoing personal and professional experiences (pp. 155-156). As they note, "Our views are not static. We continue to shape and develop them throughout our teaching careers" (p. 156).

In this chapter I begin by reflecting on my personal history—my school experiences, higher education learning experiences, how I was taught, and the

experiences I had that influence my perceptions of good visual art teaching and in turn my teaching practice. This personal history is not just an indulgence to explore my own biography but is also instrumental in order to understand how I have learned and continue to learn to teach and how this has shaped my identity. This journey is intended to examine old practices in new ways. This journey provides me with the opportunity to revisit and re-examine my cultural and educational past in order to consciously consider how past experiences are framing my teaching practice. To reflect on my past and to identify my position as a researcher, this section has a strong personal and reflective component. To give meaning to my actions as a researcher, my own background and traditions must be identified and recorded alongside those of my participants. To identify myself as a researcher I must include my own interests and predisposition to working within the visual art education realm and also my desire to explore the perceptions of visual art teacher educators about good visual art teaching in a higher education setting in Malaysia.

Formative learning

When I was nine or ten years old, my father asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up. I replied that I wanted to become a teacher or a lecturer, even though I did not have much idea about those professions. At this stage I had not considered the complex question of what it means to be a teacher. As a former school teacher and now university lecturer, I believe there is no simple answer to this question. Tickle, (2000) satirically describes the teacher as:

> A technical operator, an inhumane instrument in the delivery of a bureaucratically defined curriculum, someone low in the chain of command, yet essential in the formal assessment of the success and failure of pupils and the allocation of unequal life chances to them. (p. 159)

This description of teachers has traditionally influenced the perception of many

Malaysian educators. From one generation to the next we inherited the belief that the teacher is the most knowledgeable person and teaching is about delivering knowledge. We also accepted without question that knowledge bequeathed to us by our visual art teacher educators concerning how teaching should be approached and conducted. This traditional view of Malaysian teachers is still strongly held by some teachers and members of society creating a paradoxical view of contemporary teaching as described by Groundwater-Smith, Ewing, and Cornu (2003) who suggest that:

> teachers need not only be resourceful, adaptable and knowledgeable, but they also have to be activist professionals, capable of discerning, imaginative problem solvers able to deal with constant and relentless social, economic and technological change. (pp. 4-5)

During my schooling, from 1967 to 1979, I experienced teaching as merely transmission of knowledge. Students were treated as empty vessels to be filled with knowledge and discipline was strongly maintained by the teachers. We could not afford to misbehave or fail to complete tasks such as homework. Only a handful of my teachers were tolerant and showed empathy towards their students. An incident that remains clearly in my memory was during my Year 1[2] English class. The male teacher had long fingernails and often used them to pinch his students' tummies for making noise in the class or failing to do their homework. I was pinched once for not paying attention in class. It really hurt, not only physically but also emotionally. One day we were asked to spell the word 'banana' and my friend Jamal put up his hand and spelled the word loudly, "Ba—BA, na—NA, na—NA, BANANA" without hesitation. All the

[2] Malaysian education uses 'Year 1-6' for primary schools which is equivalent to 'Grade 1-6' in Australia and the US, and 'Form 1-4' for secondary schools which is equivalent to 'Grade 7-10' in Australia and the US. Malaysian system of education has an additional year of education, i.e. "Form 5" compared to Australia and the US.

students laughed. Not because he incorrectly spelled the word; but by the way he spelled the word according to its syllables. To our astonishment, we were reprimanded for laughing. No explanation was given and we were puzzled; however at that time it was normal for students to listen and obey, so we accepted it.

I cherished learning with only a few teachers during my school years. Among these teachers was my Grade 3 English and Music teacher, Mrs. Faridah, who was also my class teacher. I remember her because she was what Intrator's (2002) student, Helen Lee, describes as a teacher with heart: "passionate, caring, alive, present, inspiring, and real" (p. xxx). What I liked about Mrs. Faridah was, in addition to the characteristics described, her ability to keep me focused on my learning and her patience. She cared for us and ensured we understood what she was teaching. Mrs. Faridah encouraged us to speak and pronounce clearly. She provided us with learning strategies that were not common at that time such as group activities. We liked group activities because those were the times we could talk with our friends, enjoy ourselves, but still learn effectively.

Another teacher was Mr. Yaamah, my History teacher when I was in secondary school. He was fun to be with and everybody seemed to like him. He socialised with his students during recess and was very humble. He would converse with the class before he began the lesson. His relationships with his students went beyond the classroom as he knew our parents and consequently who we were. We felt appreciated and cared for in his class.

Visual art has always been my favourite subject. I learned visual art from many teachers and all of them were art specialists. In Form 3, I was taught by Mr. Seet. He was a highly disciplined person. In order to enter at the precise moment the class was scheduled to start, he would wait outside our class. Mr. Seet would make sure the class was in order before he started his teaching and would not tolerate mischievous students. From his appearance and behaviour I

knew he was a well-mannered person. He came to my home once because he wanted to collect a type of flower which he was very interested in. I observed the polite way he spoke to my parents. In our class, he was also courteous, unless we did not do what he asked us to do. We were not allowed to talk or make noise, otherwise the whole class would be penalised and that meant no art lesson for that day. Mr. Seet's art skills were of a high standard especially in design. He would normally start a lesson by showing us his artworks to give us some ideas on the topic that he was teaching. For Mr. Seet, every art task needed to be done carefully and neatly. He would praise any artworks that he deemed were good and would hang them on the wall or on the notice boards. His teaching orientation was outcomes-based as he focused his attention on what his students had learnt or achieved based on analysis and evaluation of the artworks.

In Form 4, there was Brother Stephen, my art teacher who was very strict in his teaching. He was a very quiet person and would never talk to his students unless it was necessary. However the art activities he introduced to us were enjoyable. We did many projects that were craft-based, such as silkscreen printing, lino printing, and woodcraft. This approach was different compared to my previous learning experiences where the emphasis had been solely on fine art and design skills such as drawing, painting, and design. Brother Stephen's teaching was also based on the master-apprentice model of teaching skills and techniques without considering what the student may bring to the art classroom. We were given guidelines to perform for each task and had to follow a set routine. Brother Stephen only transmitted knowledge, and did not encourage us to form our own opinions about art. He provided us with a step-by-step process of making artwork and wanted every student to comply with his demands, otherwise we would be penalised severely.

I also remember Mrs. Judy, who was also an art specialist. She approached her teaching in a more relaxed manner. She never scolded us or raised her voice. No action was taken when we forgot to take our art materials with us. Instead

she would provide us with art materials relevant to what she was teaching. She was very patient with us especially when most of us were quite playful. I believe she wanted to establish a rapport with us in addition to teaching us art skills.

My art teacher in Form 6 was Mr. Robert, whom I liked very much. His fatherly approach to his teaching earned him my respect. He was a quiet person but every word he uttered motivated his students. He had a deep interest in his students and cared for them. In his teaching, he would start by sharing information and providing us with some examples of the relevant topic. We would then carry out the task. While we were doing our artwork, he would move around to each student and discuss our work. If he felt something needed improvement, he would provide us with his feedback. Some of the questions he asked were, "What do you think of your artwork?", or "What would you do to improve your artwork?" At other times he would involve me and my friend in his teaching by helping him to teach other students. His approach reminds me of a Chinese proverb, "Tell me and I forget, show me and I remember, involve me and I understand." Perhaps a cliché now but that was what he did.

I still remember my first class with him when he introduced Rembrandt's masterpieces. We were to reproduce the works of the old masters by analysing the painting. During this process I arrived at an understanding of the techniques the Dutch Master used. Mr. Robert wanted to see how perceptive and skilful we were at mixing colours to obtain the exact colours used by the masters, and how good we were at differentiating forms, shapes, textures, space, and lines. His teaching reflected a master-apprentice approach yet was also student-centred. It was a mixed method approach to teaching. Mr. Robert first decided what to do in order to teach us and then he would let us explore at our own pace. He was aware of his students' strengths and built on them. A good example was when Mr. Robert asked us to compose a drawing. We were advised to compose something that was familiar to us, something that we had experienced through seeing. He would go round the class and stop at any

students whom he deemed needed help. His personality was pleasant and he treated me with respect. This encouraged me to go beyond his expectations. I managed to do that by achieving the highest distinction in my 'A' level examination, a feat that had never been achieved before. The achievement was made more significant as that subject was examined by external examiners from the University of Cambridge.

Learning to teach

I remember my first teaching appointment. I was only 20 years old. It was in 1980 after I completed my 'A' level and without any teaching qualification. The school, Methodist English School (MES), was a private missionary school located in the heart of Melaka city. The mission of the school was to provide an alternative education to those students who failed their public examinations and did not qualify to further their studies in a government funded school. Teaching qualifications were not required because the teaching position was considered to be temporary. However, three of the teachers had been working for more than 10 years and teaching was a permanent job for them. The students came from various socio-economic backgrounds. All of them were 'drop-outs' of the public school examination system, having failed their Lower Certificate of Examination (LCE) or Malaysian Certificate of Examination (MCE).

I shall never forget my very first encounter with my students. The class was noisy as everybody was shouting. The situation was very chaotic. I did not panic. I knew that I was not entering completely unknown territory. I had experienced this as a student, and had reacted in the same way when my teacher was not around. I decided to see what would happen if I stood in front of the class and watched them. It did not take long before I lost my patience. Immediately I remembered what my teachers did and it always worked. I started raising my voice and with a strict stern face, I warned them to keep

quiet. The class slowly became subdued. In hindsight I think that Bandura's (1977) social learning theory[3] worked perfectly in this situation.

I remember holding firm ideas about what I should be teaching and how I should be teaching. My experiences as a student and years of experience observing the work of teachers were powerful factors influencing my beliefs. However, I did not adopt a single teaching style from any specific teacher but adapted elements from a number of different styles to suit my own character.

When I reflected on my early teaching experiences at MES, I realised my visual art teaching practice then was teacher-centred rather than student-centred. My idea of visual art teaching was based on the master-apprentice model and grounded upon the idea of the function of art as realistic representation. My interest in teaching *realistic art*[4] influenced my teaching. I was not aware of art theories or any other methods of teaching. I conceived of visual art teaching as developing and mastering particular art skills. I was not aware of further developments in art after Realism as I was not taught about art movements such as Post-Modernism by any of my art teachers. At that time, I prioritised accuracy in drawing and painting and believed that the work should be as realistic as possible. I also strongly embraced the concept of beauty, the technical mastery of the material and was preoccupied with the quality of the form. I considered student artworks, which did not correspond to these requirements to be unsatisfactory and in need of correction.

I assumed that when students were making paintings and drawings from observations of objects, people or landscapes that they should be aiming to develop specific representational skills associated with the idea of 'rendering' a

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[3] Bandura (1977) suggests that people imitate behaviours they observe in others (p. 22). In his social learning theory, Bandura focuses on the learning that occurs within a social context. It considers that people learn from one another through observational learning, imitation, and modelling.

[4] Harold Osborne (1991) defines Realistic Art as the work of art that represents what is actual.

reasonable likeness. I denied any value to works that had exaggerated forms, omitted or simplified parts, developed imaginative shapes, or idealised subjects. That happened for many years. I attribute the teacher-directed approach that I employed in my teaching practice, and my perception of visual art teaching as a direct result of the teaching approaches employed by my own teachers.

I was pleased when my students managed to produce the kind of artwork that I encouraged. When they all scored magnificently in their public examination and consequently the standards set by the Ministry of Education, Malaysia it seemed to prove that my teaching approach was effective. This reinforced my belief that my approach was correct. I still remember when one of the most notorious students in the school, Rosli, scored the highest distinction in his art subject at General Certificate of Education 'O' Level[5]. Unfortunately he failed in all of his other subjects. It was amazing to see his progress when early in the year his standard in art was quite poor. He could not draw or colour well. More often than not, he would 'over brush' the drawing paper until the paper was worn through. When I reflect on how I dealt with this student, I felt that it was not my dissemination of knowledge and skill that motivated him but my personal approach. I gave full attention to all of my students and treated them as my friends, especially those I identified as needing assistance. During recess I mingled with my students and we ate together. Every Saturday I conducted free art lessons and we played badminton and soccer together after class. I managed to earn their respect as opposed to other teachers who pressured them for not being able to cope with their studies. In Rosli's case, I presume he became notorious due to the teachers' treatment of him. I built a relationship with him and also with other students. Most of my students became my good

[5] The General Certificate of Education or GCE is a secondary-level academic qualification that examination boards in Malaysia confer to students. The GCE traditionally comprised two levels: the Ordinary level (O-level) and the Advanced level (A-Level).

friends. They supported me in my teaching by doing all the home work given to them and attending extra classes.

After a couple of years teaching I decided to further my studies. Using my expertise in art, I managed to secure a place in University of Science, Malaysia (USM) and undertook a degree in Fine Art. My passion for art has certainly helped me in my teaching career. Eisner (2002a) in *Arts and the Creation of Mind*, mentions that his passion for visual arts was "a source of salvation for me at both the elementary and secondary school level." He comments, "I might not have got through without them" (p. ix). It was the same for me.

My passion for art and my fond memories of teaching made me realise that I needed to have a 'licence' to teach. Therefore I applied for the Art Teachers' Diploma Course at the MARA Institute of Technology in Shah Alam, Selangor (Now known as MARA University of Technology). As I began my preservice teacher education I held a range of beliefs about what it was to be a teacher. These beliefs were based on my prior experience as a teacher, my exposure to classroom models of teaching, and images of teachers represented through the media. Other representations were derived from my personal experiences. During my teacher education course, I was exposed to a more contemporary curriculum approach to visual art teaching. I learned about principles of visual art and design, visual art education methodology, visual art and design education, research in visual art education, visual art education pedagogy and a few studio courses that were related to the school context such as *batik* and pottery. I also learned about psychology of education, philosophy of education, and sociology of education. During this course I developed a better understanding of art education and enhanced my knowledge and skills in drawing, painting, sculpture, and graphic design. I learned not only from the visual art teacher educators who were prominent artists and experienced visual art educators such as Mr. Khalid, an established painter, Mr. Hashim, a graphic designer, and Dr. Isa, an educationalist; but also my peers.

During my teaching practicum, I learned from my cooperating teachers and received full support from them and the school principal. My teaching practicum experiences were wonderful. I managed to put into practice what I learned during my teacher education program. My students seemed to enjoy doing art and craft works. They volunteered in every activity that I proposed such as mural painting and art exhibition project.

After completing my art teachers' diploma in 1988, achieving the Best Student award, I started teaching again as a qualified teacher. I tried to practice what I learned from my teacher education program. Most of the things I learned during my teacher education program were lost or modified when I faced the reality of classroom life. I realised that the psychological approach that I learned did not work in a school setting where students were not keen to learn. I was taught that we needed to establish good relationships with students by not being too strict with them. However, students took advantage of this leniency. I studied my students' behaviours and attitudes towards learning and I realised that their behaviours and attitudes were similar to my students in MES. In the end I decided to teach the way I had been teaching in MES with some adaptation of what I had learned in teacher education training.

In many ways my teaching was an unquestioning acceptance of specific cultural traditions of visual representation that I received during my education. The consequence of my approach to teaching drawing or painting was expecting students to produce a particular representational form. In light of contemporary understandings of art education, my teaching method was very restrictive.

In later years, my interest in developing approaches to teaching art that accommodated the diverse practices of students has grown and was given a strong impetus in 1996 when I was accepted to undertake my Masters Degree at McGill University, Canada. There I worked with Associate Professor Boyd E. White, an aesthetician, who introduced me to numerous ideas about art

education that I could apply to my professional work. It was during my postgraduate study that I was introduced and exposed to a range of visual art teaching philosophies, theories, concepts, approaches and activities.

I also remember Professor Lyn Butler-Kisber who taught me Qualitative Research Methods. Her content knowledge was outstanding. I was astonished at the strength of her pedagogical skills. She conducted her class well. She kept me attentive. She used diverse teaching techniques and approaches that kept us wondering what she was going to do. For example, in a group activity, she would indirectly arrange our seating based on our month of birth, or colours of balloons she distributed to us. This was to encourage students to mix and get to know each other better. Most of our learning was based on group discussions and cooperative learning was a key element in her teaching. We worked independently on a well-defined learning task. We were also held individually accountable for our own performance.

While in Canada, I could see the ways in which art works did more than represent the real world. For example, in the subway station, every station had different types of artworks; and in the art galleries, there was a range of different art styles and forms. This scenario does not exist in Malaysia.

In the elementary school, in which I conducted my research observations, the art teacher, although a generalist, tried her best to teach art within her capacity. She appeared to utilise a 'child-centred' approach—an approach that emerged in the first decades of the 20th century, and became the dominant mode of visual art teaching after the World War II. This was evident in her teaching when every child in her class produced very expressive art work. At other time, she introduced *papier-maché* masks which she related to Halloween. She approached her teaching by relating art to daily life and made it enjoyable for her students.

As I began to see the ways in which art could be many different things, I also observed that visual art teaching could be approached in many different ways.

Now, as a visual art teacher educator in a Malaysian university, I realise that there are many factors that influence how visual art teacher educators approach their teaching practice. I begin to see my students' learning as central to the teaching-learning process. This did not consciously happen when I began teaching. Subconsciously I saw teaching as more important than student learning. I believed that if my teaching was good, the learning would follow. Now I see that if my students learn from my teaching, it indicates that my teaching is good. I sometimes see visual art teacher educators confusing these two concepts.

Teaching in higher education is based on the traditional lecture method, a method that has been the main teaching mechanism of delivering knowledge. I believe that adult learners should be able to take responsibility for their own learning. The "teach as I was taught" approach tends to perpetuate the lecture as a passive, one-way method of transferring information. However it did not take long before I realised that I needed to change my approach as teaching and learning in a higher education setting must be an intellectually challenging experience for students and lecturers.

I focussed my efforts on improving my teaching by changing the role of my students from passive observers to active participants. In this approach, my students and I shared the responsibility for meeting learning objectives. I believe one of the most important steps in achieving this shared responsibility is careful planning. I learned about planning when I undertook the Principalship and Leadership course in Institiut Aminuddin Baki (IAB). The course helped me a lot. I always made sure that my lecture was appropriate for the particular learning situation. I believe that when properly planned for the appropriate type of material, the lecture can be a very effective method for transmitting information to students.

I realised that my teaching was formed by the way I was brought up by my parents, the society that I lived in, my learning and teaching experiences, and

my exposure to a multitude of educational philosophies and theories. My conscious process was through regular reflection on the issues related to teaching, and my actions during my teaching practice which Schön (1987) terms "reflection-on-action" and "reflection-in-action". I believe that in establishing an identity as a teaching professional, it is critical that I come to understand my identity as a lifelong learner and consequently, my own beliefs, values, and understanding.

My professional experiences

As opposed to teaching in a school setting, teaching in higher education requires good understanding of theoretical and conceptual knowledge. Having taught in school settings for more than 23 years has helped me to understand the relationship between theory and practice.

I have taught three courses each year at the university: Theories of Visual Art Education, Visual Art Education Management, and Visual Art Education Curriculum. All three courses were constructivist in nature because of the manner in which I asked students to continuously assess their previous and current learning, trace their changing ideas and values, and relate what they thought of themselves and their beliefs to their evolving conceptualisations of teaching and learning. My general intent was to provide them with opportunities to understand their learning process and make sense of it. As much as possible I tried to avoid telling or showing, unless absolutely necessary. I employed student-centred and task-based approaches in class. I nurtured the students' minds to engage in critical thinking and led students into open discussions. In each course I devised a plan for students to have opportunities to find information on their own based on certain topics related to the course, present them in the class, and discuss them openly. I acted as a facilitator and motivator to my students.

Research questions

This study attempts to raise some of the professional issues with which visual art teacher educators are confronted, largely those concerned with visual art teaching practice in teacher education. This research investigates the perceptions of good teaching by addressing three research questions. They are namely, the visual art teacher educators' theories and philosophies of visual art education: *What are visual art teacher educators' accounts of good visual art teaching practice in higher education?* Secondly, the visual art teacher educators' beliefs and values: *What are visual art teacher educators' beliefs and values concerning good visual art teaching?* Thirdly, the visual art teacher educators' biography: *What life shaping factors inform visual art teacher educators' teaching practice?*

An understanding of various visual art education theories and philosophies from the perceptions of four visual art teacher educators will inform our understanding of what it is to teach visual art in higher education in Malaysia. Therefore, the first research question examines various visual art education theories and philosophies in higher education through the participants' accounts.

The second research question draws on the diverse experiences of the participants by interrogating their beliefs and values of good visual art teaching in higher education in Malaysia. It aims to expand our understanding of why certain beliefs and values are held. The second research question will enable us to comprehend the participants' beliefs and values reflected through the priorities they choose, and which they act on consistently and repeatedly.

The third research question aims to understand how Malaysian visual art teacher educators teach and what factors shape their teaching practice. Studying teacher educators' lives by examining their background and personal experiences and the direct and indirect influences their individual situations have on their life and work provide insights into factors that shape their

teaching approaches. It attempts to capture the meanings and understandings that they use as a basis for their actions in specific settings thus providing data to research question three. This will enrich understanding as to why and how certain approaches are being practiced.

Significance of this research

This research is significant in that it provides insights into why certain teaching approaches are practiced in Malaysia and how this relates to individual visual art teacher educators' beliefs, values, and understandings. It will also provide information that may be utilised by future planning committees of the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia and the University of Education Malaysia. This information could inform process design, concept developments, or in consideration for future design of visual art education program in order to make Malaysia the 'centre of educational excellence' (Rao, 1997).

Research on good teaching in higher education settings has quite recently become a serious agenda item in almost every university and college. An increasing number of studies have taken up this theme (Arnold, 2000; Barone, 2001; Beijaard, Verloop, & Vermunt, 2000; Brearley, 2000; Campbell, Roland, & Buetow, 2000; Day, 2000; Day & Leitch, 2001; Gee, 2000-2001; Hall, 2000; Larrivee, 2000; Miller, 2000; Palmer, 2000; Trigwell, Martin, Benjamin, & Prosser, 2000). A thorough literature search indicates that most of the studies are concerned with good teaching in general settings (Green, 2001; Kent, 2004; Leitch & Day, 2001; Levin, 2001; Mason, 2002; Radnor, 2002) or conceptions and beliefs about 'good teaching' in higher education seen by student teachers (Entwistle, Skinner, Entwistle, & Orr, 2000). Few studies have addressed pedagogical approaches that promote good teaching in higher education (Lam & Kember, 2004; Suzi, 2002; Whitehurst, 2002). Within the realm of art education in higher education settings, much of the research has focused on art education curriculum models (Barrett, 1997b; Duncum, 2001; Efland,

Freedman, & Stuhr, 1996; McFee & Degge, 1993) rather than visual art teaching in higher education. Thus, this research is deemed as important in generating a better understanding of good visual art teaching in higher education. In relation to the Malaysian context, there is no research that has investigated good visual art teaching through the lens of visual art teacher educators in higher education settings.

This research project contributes to the comprehension and application of narrative inquiry as opposed to the mainstream quantitative research methods which have dominated the research field. This method of inquiry provides an alternative to the research field and enriches the realm of the Malaysian research context. This type of research methodology allows for individual participant voices to be heard and understood in rich detail while at the same time providing an insight into the personal meanings that visual art teacher educators attach to their work.

Research outline

This thesis is set out in eight chapters beginning with my journey in education through to my beliefs, understandings, and teaching practice. Chapter one also outlines the purpose and aims of this study by providing justification and insight into this research project.

Chapter two reviews the literature and discusses issues related to the topic of good teaching in different settings covering higher education, teacher education, and art teacher education. In addition, the review of literature focuses on other issues related to visual art teacher educators' beliefs, values, and practices, and also factors that influence visual art teacher educators' perceptions and practice.

Chapter three details the research methodology as well as the approaches used. The process involved in developing the research instruments and the

procedures required for gaining approval and conducting the research are detailed. I describe the selection of the research approach and the various data gathering strategies, and detail the procedures used in the study's research methodology. I introduce narrative inquiry as a methodology and make a case for using it to aid in the creation of this thesis as a narrative. Over the course of this research I came to use story-telling as a means of representing experience in the research field.

Chapters four through to seven present narrative accounts of the participants related to their life histories, their learning experiences and teaching experiences. This chapter also provides perceptions of these visual art teacher educators in relation to what good visual art teaching looks like in a higher education setting. I tell several 'stories' about past experiences and current experiences which illustrate some of the key issues I seek to address in this research.

This study concludes with an epilogue. In this chapter I discuss the findings derived from the data analysis process of the study. I have also provided a number of recommendations related specifically to each of the aspects addressed in this chapter. The epilogue concludes with an overview of future directions for research in the area of art education in higher education. Whilst not presenting any practical suggestions for educators, this chapter provides suggestions for future study, as well as some reflective considerations on the subject of the pedagogical task and presents further areas for reflective consideration.

Chapter Two:
Review of Literature

Teaching is not something one learns to do, once and for all, and then practices, problem-free, for a lifetime, anymore than one knows how to have friends, and follows a static set of directions called "friendship" through each encounter. Teaching depends on growth and development, and it is practiced in dynamic situations that are never twice the same. (Ayers, 2001, p. 127)

Introduction

The aim of this study is to explore the perceptions of four visual art teacher educators concerning what good visual art teaching looks like in a higher education setting in Malaysia. The research questions that drive the study are: What are visual art teacher educators' accounts of good visual art teaching practice in higher education? What are visual art teacher educators' beliefs and values concerning good visual art teaching? What life shaping factors inform visual art teacher educators' teaching practice?

The purpose of this chapter is to review and synthesise literature relevant to the study of perceptions of good teaching in higher education. This chapter begins by examining relevant literature addressing good teaching in higher education and good teaching in teacher education. This is followed by a discussion of the development of art education with a focus on visual art teaching practice, and consideration of what is known in relation to good teaching in visual art teacher education.

Good teaching in higher education

What constitutes good teaching in higher education has intrigued and challenged those concerned with this sector for many decades and is subject to on-going inquiry and debate. In part this is because ideas about good teaching and learning practices change from generation to generation as research provides new understandings about the phenomenon. For example, deep learning approaches, student-centred approaches, collaborative learning, peer reviewing, self-regulated learning, and reflective practice are part of recent theoretical and practical developments in higher education which may be contrasted with teacher-centred approaches that were prevalent in earlier higher education practice (Biggs, 2003; Shulman, 1999; Stones, 1994). Researchers have tried to pinpoint the components of good teaching in higher education since the 1930s (Kane, Sandretto, & Heath, 2004) and a number of researchers have acknowledged that a widely accepted definition of good teaching is yet to emerge (Biggs, 1999a; McLean, 2001). There are few commonly agreed definitions of good teaching in higher education. This is illustrated in the plethora of models and variety of interpretations of what constitutes good teaching which will be discussed in the following section.

Knowledge transmission and knowledge transformation

The most common models of teaching in higher education are related to conceptions of *transmission of knowledge* and *transformation of knowledge* (Biggs, 2003; Shulman, 1999; Stones, 1994). These are also respectively known as the 'instruction model' and the 'construction model' which Carnell (2007) describes as 'quantitative conceptions' and 'qualitative conceptions' of teaching. According to Carnell (2007), "Quantitative conceptions are encompassed by the instruction view (passive imbibing of information); qualitative conceptions are encompassed by the construction

view (individual sense-making)" (p. 27).

Over the past eighty years or so, education theorists (Berliner, 1994; Biggs, 2003; Dewey, 1916) have repudiated the notion that it is the teacher's role to act as an authority in the classroom, transmitting knowledge to students. There has been a move away from the view that students are blank slates on which teachers inscribe new knowledge. Dewey (1916) opposed "beliefs fixed by authority" in education (p. 339), as does Eisner (2002) who believes that good teaching "cannot be shipped, pumped, or transmitted like the contents of a letter into the heads of students" (p. 47). Essentially a knowledge transmission approach treats knowledge as a commodity that is deposited within a student's mind. In this approach, the teacher's effectiveness as a transmitter can be rather uncertain. This uncertainty is commonly relieved through testing, as a means to check on the effectiveness of teaching. This way of looking at what teachers do has been criticised by educational reformers on the basis that it is too mechanical, and it places too much emphasis on rote learning and memory recall. Dewey (1938), for example, states that,

> It is hardly an exaggeration to say that too often the pupil is treated as if he (sic) were a phonograph record on which is impressed a set of words that are to be literally reproduced when the recitation or examination presses the proper lever. Or, varying the metaphor, the mind of the pupil is treated as if it were a cistern into which information is conducted by one set of pipes that mechanically pour it in, while the recitation is the pump that brings the material out again through another set of pipes. Then the skill of the teacher is rated by his or her ability in managing the two pipelines of flow inward and outward...The mind is not a piece of blotting paper that absorbs and retains automatically. It is rather a living organism that has to search for its food, that

> selects and rejects according to its present conditions and needs, and that retains only what it digests and transmutes into part of the energy of its own being. (pp. 261-262)

The knowledge transformation approach is by contrast, not primarily concerned with whether the knowledge has arrived safely. Rather, the central questions in this approach have to do with such things as how the knowledge in question is understood and used by the learner; how it relates to what was learned before; how it becomes personalised when translated into the learner's own language; and how it is applied to new situations. In cognitive terms, the focus is no longer on the power of memory and recall. It now encompasses levels of mental functioning intended to gain personal understanding (Killen, 2007, p. 3). This approach is also known as 'deep learning' (Biggs, 2003). Deep learning approaches integrate facts into a holistic learning of concepts. Students with the ability to use deep learning approaches may use surface approaches when the task demands it, such as learning a large amount of material quickly for an examination, however they do not find such tasks satisfying (Ramsden, 2003). Case and Marshall (2004) contend that there is a continuum between surface and deep learning approaches, which vary according to the intention of the student and the context of the learning task. They argue that any dichotomous view of surface learning and deep learning approaches ignores the complexity of the process of learning (p. 460).

Trigwell, Martin, Benjamin, and Prosser (2000) highlights some misunderstandings of deep and surface learning approaches. To him one of the most common misunderstandings of deep and surface approaches is that "a concern about details is related to surface approaches and a concern for overall ideas is related to deep approaches" (p. 29). Trigwell, Martin, Benjamin, and Prosser (2000) believe that all learning requires the relating of argument and evidence while students adopting a surface learning approach might just memorise facts or list unsupported documents. Students

adopting deep learning approach make meaning through the manipulation of more detailed information. There is more to learning than subject matter acquisition if one is to learn to be imaginative with the subject matter learned; one needs opportunities where imaginative production is not only sanctioned but aggressively and intentionally cultivated. Trigwell, Martin, Benjamin and Prosser (2000) agree that the deep and surface learning approaches are a continuum.

More recently the debates about transmission of knowledge and transformation of knowledge have been linked to a teacher-centred versus student-centred approach. In teacher-centred approaches, the teacher is the sole, infallible source of information. According to Postareff, Lindblom-Ylanne and Nevgi (2008),

> Teacher-centred teaching is described as a way of teaching in which students are considered to be more or less as passive recipients of information which is transmitted from the teachers to the students. Thus, it is argued that knowledge is constructed by the teacher and the students are expected to learn factual knowledge. (p. 30)

The teacher-centred approach which is sometimes referred to as "direct instruction, deductive teaching or expository teaching" (Killen, 2007, p. 73) provides the teacher "direct control over what and how learners are presented with the information they are to learn" (p. 73).

In a student-centred environment, there is higher motivation to learn as students feel they have a real stake in their own learning. The teacher shares control of the classroom and students are allowed to explore, experiment, and discover on their own and in collaboration with others. Their diverse thoughts and perspectives are a necessary input to every class and in collaboration with others. In relation to this, Postareff, Lindblom-Ylanne

and Nevgi (2008) state,

> student-centred teaching is described as a way of teaching which sees teaching as facilitating students' learning processes. By contrast the student-centred approach focuses on the needs and abilities of students (rather than the teachers) and on topics that are relevant to the students' lives, needs, and interests. In this concept of teaching in higher education, students themselves are actively engaged in creating, understanding, and connecting to knowledge and learning. (p. 30)

These two approaches to teaching differ in a number of ways, including what the teacher does, how the lessons are organised, how much the learners are involved in learning, and how much the learners control their own learning. In either approach, teaching in higher education is a complex phenomenon and no single teaching approach provides a definitive solution. The ability to use a variety of teaching strategies and make relational decisions about when each strategy is likely to be more effective is a decision made by the teaching professional.

Palmer (2007) argues that learning is enhanced and supported by teachers who have the capacity to generate community between themselves and their 'subject', between themselves and students, and eventually between students and the 'subject'. The key to good university teaching, he proposes, is not that it is 'student-centred' but that it is 'subject-centred'. In a subject-centred classroom, teachers succeed in conveying to students not only their enthusiasm for the subject but also how and why the subject matters. Importantly, Palmer puts forward the idea that teachers, who succeed in building this vital connection between the subject matter and students, are those who have found their integrity. Given the challenges of our times, the knowledge of 'subject' needs to be understood more broadly, including skills and attitudes specific to particular subject areas, the much needed

generic knowledge areas and skills necessary for students to participate effectively in their later civic, professional and personal lives.

Lecture method

Traditionally teaching in higher education is based on the instruction model known as the 'lecture method', a method grounded in knowledge transmission. Phillips (2005) describes this method as follows:

> Lectures and lecturing are consistent with a pre-modern view of controlling knowledge. They are also consistent with a modern view of knowledge, with a tacit adoption of an objectivist epistemology, a focus on transmission of content, and for learners to be passive recipients of knowledge. (p. 5)

Exley and Dennick (2004) state that the lecture method was established formally centuries ago, "in the monasteries of Europe before the use of printed books, where scholars would travel hundreds of miles to gain access to specific texts" (p. 3). In a lecture, the teaching process often begins with a literal reading of important passages from the text by the master, followed by the master's interpretation of the text. Students are expected to sit, listen and take notes (Swanson & Torraco, 1995). Killen (2007) asserts that the lecture method is a teacher-centred approach in which "the teacher delivers academic content in a highly structured format, directing the activities of learners and maintaining a focus on academic achievement" (p. 102). These modes of teaching have been very popular for many years (Killen, 2007). To this day, in most university subjects, the dominant mode of teaching consists of lectures, tutorials and laboratory practical sessions (Laurillard, 2002).

There are, however, serious questions regarding the effectiveness of the traditional lecture method. Exley and Dennick (2004) claim that "traditionally lecturing is often perceived by students as boring, with little

intellectual stimulation coming from monotonous lecturers" (p. 3). Such lecturing is often viewed as passive learning. Laurillard (2002) contends that in many cases, there are weaknesses in the traditional approach to teaching at university, with its emphasis on lectures, resulting in lost opportunities to make use of other learning situations. A contributing factor is that, in the absence of formal teaching qualifications, many university lecturers tend to teach in the didactic way that they were taught.

Edlich (1993) argues that the lecture method for large classes is outdated and ineffective while some scholars believe that lecture method is less effective than other methods in changing thoughts and attitudes (Bligh, 1998; Eison & Bonwell, March, 1998). Bligh (1998) notes that lectures are less effective as a means of promoting thought, critical thinking and changing students' attitudes. McIntosh (1996) observes that lecturing is frequently a one-way process unaccompanied by discussion, questioning or immediate practice, which makes it a poor teaching and learning method. Munson (1992) notes that lectures generally arise from the instructor's point of view, and the student's need for interaction with the instructor is not addressed. Lack of interaction is considered one of the major limitations of the traditional lecture as it promotes passive learning, encouraging students to merely listen and absorb information, but not necessarily inter-relate ideas. Nevertheless that does not necessarily mean that the traditional lecture method is without merit. Palmer (2007) argues that a properly enacted lecture method can be an effective method of teaching. Recalling his experience Palmer states,

> One of my memorable mentors was a man who seemed to break every "rule" of good teaching. He lectured at such length, and with enthusiasm, that he left little room for questions and comments. Preoccupied with the world of thought, he listened poorly to students, not because he disdained them but because he was so eager to teach them

> by the only way he knew—sharing his knowledge and passions. His classes were mostly monologues, and his students rarely played any role other than audience. (p. 22)

Although Palmer appeared to have no problems with this type of teaching method he agrees that his lecturer "violated most rules of good group process and even some rules of considerate personal relationships" (p. 23). What mattered most to Palmer was that the lecturer generously opened the life of his mind to his students and gave "full voice to the gift of thought" (p. 23). Ramsden (2003) suggests that lecture method can be effective if active engagement, imaginative inquiry and the finding of a suitable level are addressed. Teaching methods that necessitate student activity, student problem-solving and question-asking, and co-operative learning contribute to the effectiveness of a lecture method.

In sum, the enduring nature of the lecture method can be attributed to a range of factors. Among these factors are cost and efficiency factors in terms of time and energy saved in planning and implementing teaching. Lectures are flexible in that they can be applied to most, if not all, content areas, and they are relatively simple to implement. At their most basic level they involve presentation of content, at the more complex level they seek to utilise deep learning approaches. The challenge remains to ensure that the method is used to both transmit knowledge and to enable students to transform knowledge.

Interactive learning as a context for knowledge transformation

There are calls to move away from transmission of knowledge to transformation of knowledge approaches. Interactive learning is a key strategy in this move. Research has shown that an interactive learning environment can generate effective instruction and learning (Edlich, 1993; Hake, 1998; Harper & Hedberg, 1997; McIntosh, 1996; Sims, 1998). Interactive learning, according to Hake (1998) is "a method of acquiring

information through engagement of students in heads-on (always) and hands-on (usually) activities which yield immediate feedback..." (p. 65). Hake's (1998) study shows that students in interactive courses significantly improved achievement over those in traditional ones. Encouraging students to engage actively in learning provides a platform for deep approaches to learning which subsequently influences learning outcomes (Ramsden, 2003).

According to Gray (2007), this method of teaching creates a democratic environment where the activities are interactive and student-centred, and the students are empowered by a teacher who operates as a facilitator / consultant. From a social-constructivist position, Redden, Simon, and Aulls (2007) believe that,

> Learning relies on social interaction and collaboration in meaning making. Course content presented through lectures should be accompanied by assignments in which learners must reflect on and use new information. In constructivist learning environments, assessment methods emphasize the learning process itself and encourage students to engage in reflective activities. (p. 151)

Variations of the traditional lecture format have been developed including the Lecture-Discussion model. This model takes "the strength of lectures—clear presentation of ideas and economy of effort—and combines them with an interactive format that encourages students to actively construct their own understanding" (Eggen & Kauchak, 1996, p. 260). The effectiveness of this model according to Eggen and Kauchak (1996) comes from three sources. First, it utilises what students already know by building on their existing understandings. Second, teachers using the model present information in a systematic way which helps students construct their understanding of the topic. Finally, the model uses teacher questioning to actively involve students in the learning process (p. 211).

From the discussion above, we can conclude that there are various methods of teaching in higher education and although some scholars prefer one method over the other, it is still not conclusive which method is best due to complexity of teaching itself. However, the current view in higher eduction that we should focus on student learning rather than solely on teaching is a key development. The following section will take on this issue.

Good teaching in relation to students' learning outcomes

While many scholars view teaching as closely related to the teachers' knowledge and skills, many scholars emphasise that teaching should also relate closely to the students' learning outcomes (Biggs, 1999b; Prosser & Trigwell, 1999; Ramsden, 2003). Prosser and Trigwell (1999) believe that good teaching is composed of three aspects. First, it is about teachers developing a coherent and well-articulated view of what they intend to achieve and how they plan to achieve that outcome. Second, it is about teachers discovering the variation in the ways students perceive the learning context, and third, it is about working towards bringing students into relationship with, and understanding of, that articulated view. Prosser and Trigwell (1999) view these teaching aspects as constituted in relation to each other. They state:

> learning and teaching are fundamentally related, [that] good teaching needs to be defined in terms of helping students learn, [that] it is the learning of students that needs to be the focus of good teaching, not the teaching activities of teachers. (p.11)

This statement echoes Dewey's (1938) idea that

> Teaching may be compared to selling commodities. No one can sell unless someone else buys. We should ridicule a merchant who said that he had sold a great amount of

> goods although no one had bought any. But perhaps there are teachers who think that they have done a good day's teaching irrespective of what pupils have learned. There is the same exact equation between teaching and learning that there is between selling and buying. (pp. 34-35)

Similar to the notion raised by Prosser and Trigwell (1999), Ramsden (2003) states that "good teaching involves striving continually to learn about students' understanding and the effects of teaching on it" (p. 8). Quality of teaching based on this concept of good teaching needs to be concerned with keeping a focus on how and what students are learning, and how this can be improved (Prosser & Trigwell, 1999; Prosser, 1993).

Many researchers (Lorsbach & Tobin, 1997; Mintzes, Wandersee, & Novak, 1997; Tobin & Tippins, 1993; von Glasersfeld, 1993) believe students should construct their own knowledge for effective learning. Such a belief stresses the importance of learner autonomy and responsibility for the learning process, and attributes greater value to the learner's experience and knowledge. Understanding how students navigate this process should provide researchers and teachers with valuable insights into how teachers could effectively adapt their teaching approach.

The reason that we should focus on student learning rather than solely on teachers' teaching according to Engelkemeyer and Brown (1998) is not so much that our current approach is 'broken' and in need of 'fixing,' but rather that we are underperforming. Engelkemeyer and Brown contend that,

> We have failed to realize the synergistic effect of designing, developing, and delivering curricula, programs, and services that collaboratively and collectively deepen, enhance, and enable higher levels of learning. (Cited in Huba & Freed, 2000, p. 3)

Huba and Freed (2000) suggest that the idea of focusing on learning rather than solely teaching requires that we "rethink our role and the role of students in the learning process" (p. 3) and in order to focus on learning "we must challenge our basic assumptions about how people learn and what the roles of teachers should be" (p. 3). Hence we must "unlearn previously acquired teaching habits" (p. 3). Simply said, we must experience a paradigm shift. To challenge our basic assumptions about teaching, Huba and Freed (2000) propose that we analyse our old ways of thinking and make continuous changes.

In addition to examining our teaching practices in relation to student learning outcomes, Huba and Feed (2000) highlight the importance of our relationships to the institution in which we teach. This is because "we and our students are part of an entire educational system that has developed at our institution from its teaching mission" (p. 6) and in order to achieve improvement, "efforts should be targeted at the system as a whole as well as at the parts individually" (p. 6).

Effective teaching

Another approach to understanding 'good' teaching is through the literature and research on effective teaching. Research on effective teaching often investigates the importance of cognitive and affective outcomes. Factors such as the quality of teaching, effective learning, classroom management, and relationships between teachers and students have often been included in models of learning and educational effectiveness (Berliner, 1994; Teddlie & Reynolds, 2000).

Nicholls (2002) suggests that "effective teaching is concerned with how best to bring about desired learning outcomes and change the way students think by involving them in learning activities" (pp. 12-13). Effective teaching is closely related to the teachers' personal attributes and professional skills (Nicholls, 2002). Personal attributes consist of characteristics such as

humour, flexibility, imagination, accessibility, supportiveness, friendliness, and enthusiasm. In relation to personal attributes, Baxter Magolda's (1996) research with students in graduate and professional schools found that a factor that helped students learn was mutual respect between students and teachers. Professional attributes consist of elements such as organisation, preparedness, currency, expertise, and time management. Professional skills consist of the ability to make work relevant, actively assist students to learn, use a variety of teaching methods, hold high expectations, give clear explanations and support, and, demonstrate fairness and equity.

Joseph Lowman (1996) describes two main dimensions of effective teaching that emerge in his studies of teaching in higher education: intellectual excitement (enthusiasm, knowledge, inspiration, humour, interesting view-point, clarity, organisation) and interpersonal concern/effective motivation (concern, caring, availability, friendliness, accessibility, helpfulness, encouragement, challenge). Other studies (Chickering & Gamson, 1991) consistently identify knowledge of subject matter, organisational skills, enthusiasm, clarity, and interpersonal skills as marks of the effective teacher.

Research on effective teaching suggests that effective teachers adjust their teaching to fit the needs of different students and the demands of different instructional goals, topics, and methods (Doyle, 1985). Shulman (2004) stresses the importance of pedagogical understanding or skill in the development of a teacher or in enhancing the effectiveness of instruction. Shulman notes in order for teaching to be effective we need to pay as much attention to the content aspects of teaching as we have devoted to the elements of teaching the process (pp. 199-200).

The research-teaching nexus

The relationship between research and teaching has begun to attract greater attention amongst researchers. There is a widespread belief in higher

education that there is a symbiotic relationship between teaching and research known as the research-teaching nexus (Bracey, 1991; Council, 1990; Jenkins, Breen, Lindsay, & Brew, 2003; Lake & Williamson, 2000; McKernan, 1988; Ramsden, 2003). In what has been characterised as the 'strong' view of the relationship between teaching and research, Ramsden and Moses (1992) argue that without involvement in research, academics cannot be good university teachers, and that without contact with students, no researcher can perform at the highest possible standard (pp. 273-295).

Cooke (1999) states, "the best teaching and learning is led by the best researchers, provided that they are appropriately trained to teach" (p. 9). Korthagen (2001) discusses the importance of the nexus between theory and practice, indicating that "both practice on its own, and theory alone are incomplete. I believe one can only really understand the former if one knows about the latter and vice versa" (p. xi).

Statistical analyses of the empirical relationship between teaching and research have produced contradictory findings. Some researchers have concluded that there is no clear statistical correlation between teaching and research, or a negative or near zero correlation both at the individual and the departmental level (Ramsden & Moses, 1992). Hattie and Marsh (1996) found no significant correlation between 'quality' in teaching and 'quality' in research.

Halse, Deane, Hobson and Jones (2007) state that the methodological simplicity and variable quality of many of the quantitative analyses of the relationship between teaching and research have been criticised on numerous grounds such as confusing quantity with quality (Elton, 2001; Feldman, 1987; Neumann, 1996), and the failure to attend to departmental, institutional and government policies and practices that bring research and teaching together or push them apart (Brew & Boud, 1995; Jenkins, Breen, Lindsay, & Brew, 2003). Elton (2001) states that "the bulk of the early research on the teaching-research link has been quantitative, but such work

can at best establish relationships, not causality" (p. 46). According to Elton, there are other ways in which such relationships may be connected causally: Good research causes good teaching; Good teaching causes good research; the dialectic relationship between good research and good teaching, i.e., they support each other. The inability of prior studies to persuasively demonstrate a clear empirical relationship prompted Neumann (1996), based on a critical review of the research, to conclude that "the findings of numerous studies remain inconclusive and consequently the debate continues" (p. 10).

Recent progress in the field of education has focused on promising theoretical explanations of these puzzling phenomena. Elton (2001) proposes that a positive nexus between teaching and research was achieved through focusing on student learning as a process. He argues that student-centred teaching and learning processes are intrinsically favourable towards a positive nexus, while more traditional teaching methods may at best lead to a positive nexus for the more able students.

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Some scholars address the issues of the research-teaching nexus through the lens of the scholarship of teaching (Boyer, 1990; Mallard, 2002; Trigwell, Martin, Benjamin, & Prosser, 2000). Boyer (1990) states, "The time has come to move beyond the old 'teaching versus research' debate and give the familiar and honourable term 'scholarship' a broader, more capacious meaning, one that brings legitimacy to the full scope of academic work" (pp. 15-16).

Boyer suggested four separate, but overlapping areas of scholarship. The four areas are: (a) the scholarship of discovery; (b) the scholarship of integration which involves making connections across the disciplines and placing the specialties in larger context; (c) the scholarship of application involves the use of knowledge to solve problems. The scholarship of

application involves education and service, the application of knowledge for the public good; and (d) the scholarship of teaching which both educates and entices future scholars by communicating the beauty and enlightenment at the heart of significant knowledge. While these conceptualisations have captured the imagination of many, Trigwell, Martin, Benjamin and Prosser (2000) contend that Boyer's descriptions of the scholarship of teaching are limited to notions of a teacher being well informed.

In 1999, the Australian Scholarship in Teaching Project was established. This project was a joint project involving four universities[6], and was housed and coordinated from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University (RMIT). The project's intention was to develop and support university teachers in their scholarly practice and to communicate the scholarship of teaching widely throughout the Australian higher education community. The Australian Scholarship in Teaching Project designed two learning modules for academic staff wishing to develop their scholarship of teaching. One module focuses on the practice of scholarly teaching, and the other focuses on the communication of scholarly teaching practice. Trigwell, Martin, Benjamin, and Prosser (2000) believe these learning modules offer a framework for making transparent the process of making learning possible. The model has four dimensions which consist of the teacher: Being informed about teaching and learning generally and in their own discipline; Reflecting on that information; Focusing the teaching approach adopted; and Communicating the relevant aspects of the other three dimensions to members of the community of scholars. All four dimensions are considered to be a necessary part of the scholarship of teaching (Trigwell, Martin, Benjamin, & Prosser, 2000).

Scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) is based on the idea that, like research, teaching in higher education can and should be a scholarly activity.

[6] The four universities were RMIT University, University of Technology Sydney, La Trobe University, and Griffith University.

The SoTL is often distinguished from scholarly learning and teaching. SoTL focuses on the learning experience of students in the context of a continual improvement exercise on the part of the teacher. A teacher engaged in SoTL might familiarise her or himself with discipline-specific and pedagogical research that relates to student learning in the discipline. She or he might then use this research to inform her or his approach to enhancing student learning. The SoTL goes further than this and might involve asking and answering certain questions about student learning in the discipline. These questions form the basis for research into student learning. The results of this research into student learning might then be communicated through conference papers and publications in scholarly journals and books, and improved teaching and learning practice.

The SoTL emphasises an evidence-based approach to learning and teaching practice as well as a critically reflective stance on practice, evidence, and scholarly literature. It should be open to review and critique by peers and accessible for exchange and use by members of a scholarly community. The SoTL is always aiming for the improvement of student learning (Smith, 2001).

Trigwell, Martin, Benjamin and Prosser (2000) identified five categories within the scholarship of teaching. These categories range from common sense ideas about extensive expertise, to complex ideas concerning the relationship of teaching and learning to the structure of knowledge within a discipline and the communicating of resulting insights about teaching and learning to colleagues and peers. The five categories are as follow:

Scholarship of teaching is about knowing the literature on teaching by collecting and reading that literature.

Scholarship of teaching is about improving teaching by collecting and reading the literature on teaching.

Scholarship of teaching is about improving student learning by investigating the learning of one's own students and one's own teaching.

Scholarship of teaching is about improving one's own students' learning by knowing and relating the literature on teaching and learning to discipline specific literature and knowledge.

The scholarship of teaching is about improving student learning within the discipline generally, by collecting and communicating results of one's own work on teaching and learning within the discipline (p. 159).

These categories suggest that a more comprehensive approach to the scholarship of teaching involves a focus on using the literature in an exploration of the teaching and learning environment of one's own teaching, with the aim of improving teaching and student learning, and communicating information to others. A less comprehensive approach has a focus on engaging with the literature with the focus on improving teaching.

Smith (2001) distinguishes *teaching* (activities to promote student learning) from *scholarly teaching* (a reflection on one's knowledge about and approach to teaching) and the *scholarship of teaching and learning* (the contributions to a developing body of knowledge about teaching and learning) (p. 53). The acceptance of the SoTL by the academic community according to Elton (2008), "has made considerable progress over the past few years, but it is still everywhere a minority interest in a climate that puts disciplinary research above all other academic activities" (p. 1). In his earlier work, Elton (2001) states that the scholarship of teaching is concerned not so much with doing things better but with doing better things. Hutchings and Shulman (1999) point out that the SoTL is "not synonymous with excellent teaching" (p. 13). They state that,

> It requires a kind of "going meta," in which faculty frame and systematically investigate questions related to student

> learning—the conditions under which it occurs, what it looks like, how to deepen it, and so forth-and do so with an eye not only to improving their own classroom but to advancing practice beyond it. This conception of the scholarship of teaching is not something we presume all faculty (even the most excellent and scholarly teachers among them) will or should do though it would be good to see that more of them have the opportunity to do so if they wish. But the scholarship of teaching is a condition—as yet a mostly absent condition for excellent teaching. It is the mechanism through which the profession of teaching itself advances, through which teaching can be something other than a seat-of-the-pants operation, with each of us out there making it up as we go. As such, the scholarship of teaching has the potential to serve all teachers and students. (p. 13)

More recently Kreber (2007) highlights some aspects of approaches pertaining to SoTL that she deemed as internationally significant. Kreber believes that we need to view SoTL not only as discipline-specific pedagogical inquiry into how students learn, but we need to recognise that it is equally important that SoTL engage with broader agendas and consider questions relating to the larger learning experience of students. Many countries face heightened pressures with regards to quality assurance in education, and SoTL could play a vital role. For these reasons, Huber and Hutchings (2005) remarked recently that SoTL is an imperative today and not a choice.

Good teaching in relation to accountability and market-driven policy

From the perspective of policy makers good teaching in higher education is part of an increasing drive towards accountability and a market-driven view

of higher education that seeks to develop a product for the consumer. Cochran-Smith (2006) asserts that "the accountability movement now dominates the discourse about reforming education" (p. xiii). Fenwick (2001) states that "Accountability is a common rallying cry of stakeholders demanding transparency and quality measured by outcomes" (p. 63), which emphasises the relationship between quality of inputs, quality of processes, and quality of outcomes (Brennan, de Vries, & Williams, 1997; Husen, 1997; Kai-Ming, 1997; Martens & Prosser, 1998; Olmesdahl, 1999). In addition, some authors stress the quality of reflection (Arvay, 2003; Bartlett, 1992; Brookfield, 1995; Chak, 2006; Green, 2001; Leitch & Day, 2001; Loughran, 1996; Mayes, 2001; Tomlinson, 1999) and scholarship of teaching (Boyer, 1990; Healey, 2000; Hutchings & Shulman, 1999; Trigwell, Martin, Benjamin, & Prosser, 2000) as key factors to be addressed in accountability processes.

Houston (2008) suggests that a shift in the focus of quality activities from accountability and control, to improvement would be more productive in improving teaching and learning. His study concludes that the language and tools of industry-born quality models are an imperfect fit to higher education. Authentic quality improvement is more likely to result from approaches to systemic interventions that encourage exploration of questions of purpose and of the meaning of improvement in context than from the imposition of definitions and methodologies from elsewhere. Olmesdahl (1999) suggests that 'purpose' or 'outcomes'[7] should not be pre-determined, especially by some extrinsic authority. He defies the pre-existing, pre-defined declaration specifying that 'purpose' suggests the acceptance of a passive model of the individual, and that it is right and proper for education to mould student development and growth (p. 421).

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[7] A few education economists distinguish between 'outcome' and 'output' as far as higher education is concerned. With 'output' they mean the immediate, short-term and direct effects of education in terms of measurable knowledge and attitudes, while 'outcome' refers to long-term effects in terms of the competence and career, which former students have on the labour market (Husén, 1997, p. 39).

A general movement toward assessment in higher education throughout North America, the United Kingdom, and Australia has tried to demonstrate the 'value-added' benefit of instruction in higher education. Malaysia is no exception. Ewell (1995) states that the movement is evident in curriculum restructuring to achieve higher levels of instructor productivity, a focus on continuous quality improvement, and pressure for instructor and institutional accountability for key performance indicators (cited in Fenwick, 2001, p. 63). Therefore, in some countries, an advisory body that consists of representatives from government (outsider input) and teaching experts (insider input) has been established to formulate certain guidelines that were considered as "fitness for purpose". For example, in Australia, a number of initiatives to promote quality and excellence in university teaching have been established. These initiatives have included the Australian Universities Teaching Committee (AUTC), the Committee for the Advancement of University Teaching (CAUT), the Committee for University Teaching and Staff Development (CUTSD), and the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC formerly Carrick). All these bodies were established to promote excellence in higher education by recognising, rewarding and supporting teachers and professional staff through a suite of award, fellowship and grant schemes. The aim is to enhance the student learning experience by supporting quality teaching and practice.

In Malaysia, the Ministry of Higher Education has established the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) to promote quality teaching and learning in higher education. The MQA is responsible for monitoring and overseeing the quality assurance practices and accreditation of national higher education. MQA has developed a code of practice on criteria and standards for higher education in Malaysia. This code of practice is benchmarked against international good practices and nationally accepted by stakeholders through various consultations.

Summary

From the discussion above, the key-concepts and strategies for good teaching in higher education are related to the type of activity being undertaken. The scholars and writers who espouse good teaching as having a close relationship with quality learning and scholarship in teaching have been responsible for generating key concepts in good teaching. From the notions of good teaching in higher education, we can see that the issues of knowledge transmission and knowledge transformation are contentious. However, the understanding that good teaching in higher education is closely related to students' learning outcomes has resulted in strategies such as interactive learning and the enhancement of lecture method to accommodate positive learning outcomes. Good teaching in higher education necessitates scholarship of teaching and in relation to accountability and market-driven policy, higher education endeavours to shift the focus of quality activities from accountability and control to improvement.

Good teaching in teacher education

In the current global economic climate, there is enormous pressure upon teacher education to serve the interests of both industry and government, and tacitly, to accept and support the values of the capitalist system (Cheng, Chow, & Tsui, 2001; Macpherson, 1994; Olmesdahl, 1999; Whitaker., 2004). Cheng, Chow, and Tsui (2001) state that "the challenges of globalization, information technology, and transformation towards new knowledge-based economies in the 21st century have brought to the surface the need to enhance the quality of education and teacher education" (p. ix).

Redden, Simon, and Aulls (2007) believe that "A challenge in teacher education is to develop instructional practices that integrate theories of learning and instruction with practical pedagogical skills" (p. 149).

However, student teachers tend to reject theoretical courses as irrelevant, and remote from their need to develop pedagogical skills that will enable them to operate effectively in the classroom. This results in visual art teacher educators finding themselves in a double bind. On the one hand, they are criticised by their students and teachers as being too theoretical and out of touch with classroom realities and on the other are bombarded by their university colleagues for having an inadequate disciplinary and theoretical base and a low commitment to pure scholarship (Turney & Wright, 1990, p. 33). There needs to be a balance between theory and practice as theory informs practice and practice informs theory (Pyser & Schiller, 2006).

Historically, Cochran-Smith (2004) define teacher education in three distinct ways, "as a training problem, as a learning problem, and as a policy problem" (p. 295). Cochran-Smith (2004) explains that she does not use the phrase problem of teacher education in a negative sense, but instead uses it to specifically focus attention on the challenge of providing well prepared and effective teachers. She states that from the 1960s to the mid-1980s, teacher education focused primarily on efforts to teach pre-service teachers those skills and behaviours empirically linked to effective teaching. The emphasis in teacher education was mainly on the pedagogical process and the inputs of education. During the 1990s, teacher education was conceptualised as essentially a learning problem. The assumption was that excellent teachers were professionals who were knowledgeable about subject matter and pedagogy and, as a result, teacher education programs sought to develop in their students' knowledge, skills and dispositions needed to function as decision maker[s] in their future classrooms (cited in Henry & Lazzari, 2007, p. 47).

The focus in teacher education has also shifted toward a focus on outcomes, and test outcomes in particular. Cochran-Smith (2006) and others (Biesta & Miedema, 2002; Britzman, 2000; Eisner, 2002c) caution that a narrow focus

on results from standardised tests may result in a correspondingly narrow definition of teacher and student learning and may drive teaching back towards technical rationality. In her book *Policy, practice, and politics in teacher education,* Cochran-Smith (2006) highlighted the narrowly constructed outcomes of teacher education that emerge when, accountability is defined by test scores alone. More recently Cochran-Smith (2008) argues the relationship between teacher quality and test outcomes is problematic for several reasons. First, the assumption that test outcomes are the most tangible outcome of schooling pays little regard to the school's and its teachers' role in helping to form socially and morally responsible citizens. Second and perhaps most crucially, this assumption ignores the fact that teachers alone cannot solve all the problems in a nation's schools. The relationships between social exclusion, poverty, inadequate housing, poor health, education under-funding and schooling appears to be overlooked (p. 620).

Teacher education as part of higher education encounters similar issues concerning what constitutes good teaching. As in higher education, the need to enhance the quality of teacher education arises due to the increasing awareness and interest of all stakeholders[8] in their rights and responsibilities pertaining to the quality of teacher education. Berliner (1992) lists a number of reasons for this growing interest. First, he suggests gaining insight into the values and beliefs associated with the performance of high quality teachers could provide a framework for designing more effective programs of teacher training. Second, Berliner suggests there may be policy implications arising from attempts to introduce merit awards for good teaching. A common justification for the rising importance of the incentive and reward system is the claim that good teaching needs to be recognised in the same way research is. With respect to the application of these ideas,

[8] The concept of 'stakeholders' is best defined as one who has a legitimate interest in the outcome of the process. In other words, stakeholders are individuals or groups who affect and are affected by the achievement of the organization's mission, goals, and strategies.

many universities in Australia now focus on the idea of scholarship of teaching within the promotion criteria for academic staff (Ramsden, Margetson, Martin, & Clarke, 1995). Malaysia is no exception. Winning a teaching award brings institutional and personal prestige as well as personal financial benefits. For instance, in Australia, the winner of the Prime Minister's Award for University Teacher of the Year receives $35,000 and a trophy (Halse, Deane, Hobson, & Jones, 2007). Third, greater understanding of the sophisticated repertoire of skills that teachers need to manage successfully the complex environment of the typical classroom could enhance the profession's public image, thereby leading to improved morale. As a result, preparation of teachers has shifted from teacher training to teacher education, focusing not only upon the 'how' but also the 'why' of teaching (Groundwater-Smith, Ewing, & Cornu, 2003, p. 42).

In order to understand better quality teaching in teacher education, we need to explore teacher educators' work, certification, identities, knowledge, skills, and issues related to their professionalism and professionalisation. These will be discussed in the next section.

Teacher educators' work

Buchbinder and Newson (1985) and Neatby (1985) suggest that the work of teacher educators in tertiary settings consists of three major functions: research, teaching, and service. Bowen and Schuster (1985), on the other hand, argue that there are four overlapping tasks: instruction, research, public service, and institutional governance and operation. Finkelstein (1984) distinguishes five components of academic work: teaching, research and publications, administration, student contact, and community service. Altbach (1991) adds the consultative role to government and industry (cited in Kreber, 2000, p. 61). Similar ways of classifying academic work are prevalent in many countries as documented by Boyer, Altbach, and Whitelaw (1994) in their international study of the academic profession.

Among the countries included were the United States of America, Australia, Sweden, Germany, the United Kingdom, Israel and Japan. The authors noted that, "in many countries there has been a growing concern about how professors spend their time, a debate that involved discussions about 'productivity' and most especially about the relationships between teaching, research, and professional service" (p. 11).

In Malaysia, teacher educators' work consists of at least seven major functions: teaching, learning, research, publications, consultations, administration, and community outreach. In general, we could sum up that teacher educators' work consists of research, teaching and service, where teaching is sometimes divided into instruction and advising, and service into various forms of institutional governance and community work. All of these aspects are seen as essential to the role of Malaysian teacher educators in a higher education setting.

Teachers' roles

Some scholars have endeavoured to describe the multifarious role of a teacher (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Groundwater-Smith, Ewing, & Cornu, 2003; Tickle, 2000). Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) in their review of teacher research in the last decade of the twentieth century identify three different conceptualisations of the roles of teachers: Teachers as technicians, teachers as professionals, and teachers as reflective practitioners.

The concept of *Teachers as technicians* refers to teachers as consumers and receivers of curriculum. Harvard and Hodkinson (1994) state that treating teachers as technicians has a long tradition in Britain. A good example was the introduction of "teacher-proof" curriculum packs in the 1970s where there were attempts "to detail very precisely what teachers will cover, and how it will be accessed" (p. 3). Apprenticeship models provide other examples of models that views teachers as technicians.

The concept of *Teachers as professionals* refers to teachers as the creators of learning, assessment, and curriculum at the classroom level. Since teaching is a complex and multifaceted activity, teaching requires wide range professional competence, drawing on a combination of experience, understanding, and principles of procedure (Stenhouse, 1975). Teachers share a body of professional knowledge related to teaching and learning, and curriculum development. Professional teachers are mentors of new teachers, and perform important roles in school reorganisation and governance. They participate in and create professional development with their colleagues (Duckworth, 1987).

The concept of *Teachers as reflective practitioners* refers to teachers as curriculum developers, decision-makers, and consultants. They are inquirers, analysts, and activists who weave reflection into their professional role, and improve their practice by collecting and analysing data from their daily practice (Darling-Hammond, 1997; Loughran & Northfield, 1996).

To summarise, whilst these might be seen as sequential developments to some extent there is overlap between these varying concepts of the teacher and the tasks and roles they fulfil.

Teacher educators' identities

Teacher educators' identities has received considerable attention in recent years (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005; Holts-Reynolds, 1992; MacCuthcheon, 1995; Taylor, 1999; van Manen, 1991). D'Andrea and Gosling (2005) contend that academics do not have one identity, but several and these identities are not always neatly prioritised. This is closely related to Clegg's (2008) view that, "Identity is commonly understood not as a fixed property, but as part of the lived complexity of a person's project and their ways of being in those sites which are constituted as being part of the academic" (p. 329).

Research suggests three types of academic identity: Personal identity, professional identity, and institutional identity (D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005; Kogan, 2000; Lasky, 2005; McAdams, Josselson, & Lieblich, 2001; Taylor, 1999). Taylor (1999) suggests that there are three levels at which academic identity is constructed; one linked to the site of work, the second through reference to the person's discipline, and the third a universal construction of what it means to be an academic (cited in D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005, p. 59). Kogan (2000) concurs with Taylor when he addressed three types of identity; one comes from being a distinctive individual, with a unique personal history, the second is embedded within communities and institutions, and the third is the idea of professional identity that is both individual and social.

Personal identity according to D'Andrea and Gosling (2005) is "formed by the cross-cutting categories such as gender, ethnicity, class, age, personal values, ideologies and history" (p. 59). Lasky (2005) defines professional identity as "how teachers define themselves to themselves and to others" (p. 901). Harris (2005) claims that today there is increasing pressure on academics to pursue what Brooks and Clark (2001) refer to as the correct professional identity. For example, universities are keen to attract and retain high-impact professors. It is increasingly important that academic activity contributes to the institution's overall strategy to maintain and improve its market position, which places more pressure on individuals to pursue and construct academic identities in line with corporate identity. How academics respond will be experienced differently depending on, for example, gender, age, and institutional context. Additionally, they argue "teacher educators must seek to strengthen their professional self regard, sense of responsibility, and purposefulness" and they propose "the realisation that their work can be a critical factor in improving the quality of teaching" as "an important starting point" (Turney & Wright, 1990, p. 122).

With reference to institutional identity, McAdams, Josselson, and Lieblich

(2001) contend that identity is formed from the work of and in a culture. It is continually reconstructed within life stories that mirror the culture in which they are told. The individual's social and cultural context serves as a co-author to the storied identity. What is learned from the family interactions, lifetime of experiences in schools, and knowledge about schools and teaching are embedded into an emerging sense of self as a teacher educator. Clegg (2008) highlighted the importance of 'space' or the site of the teacher educators' work that may include relationships with other colleagues globally, being a part of a department, and may include a range of activities, some of which are experienced as being academic and others which are not (p. 329).

Certification

In recent years, the quality of higher education teaching has been discussed and the need to improve higher education teachers' teaching skills and pedagogical thinking is now acknowledged to be essential (Postareff, Lindblom-Ylanne, & Nevgi, 2008). One of the means to achieve improvement of teaching skills and pedagogical thinking is through certification. In Malaysia, teacher educators in higher education do not need a teaching qualification due to the scarcity of experts required in the field of education.

Studies on the effect of pedagogical training of visual art teacher educators on teaching present different views of the effectiveness of pedagogical training. Norton, et al. (2005) found no differences in teaching beliefs and intentions between teachers who had participated in a pedagogical programme and teachers who had no training. However, more positive results of the effectiveness of pedagogical training have also been presented. Gibbs and Coffey (2004) showed, by using the Approaches to Teaching Inventory (Prosser & Trigwell, 1999) that by the end of a 4-18 month training programs teachers became less teacher-centred and more student-

centred. Similarly, Coffey and Gibbs (2000) found positive effects of pedagogical training on academics' teaching. After completing two- and three-semester long training programmes teachers showed significant improvements in scores measuring learning, enthusiasm and organisation. However, Postareff, Lindblom-Ylanne, and Nevgi (2008) showed that approaches to teaching change slowly. The results of a cross-sectional study implied that intensive pedagogical training is needed until positive changes in teaching approaches emerge.

Learning to teach

"Learning to teach is a developmental process, one that changes and evolves throughout a career" (Greene, 2008, p. 2). The process of learning to teach has been defined in a variety of ways by researchers. Greene (2008) states that "Learning how to teach is a deeply personal activity in which the teacher must consider his or her prior beliefs and reconcile them with the expectations of the university, the public school, the students, the parents, and ultimately him- or herself" (p. 4). Rose and Church (1998) talk about learning to teach as simply the acquisition and maintenance of practical teaching skills whereas other researchers have addressed the complexity of issues involved in learning to teach (Borko, 2004; Hoban, 2003; Labaree, 2000; McNally, Blake, Corbin, & Gray, 2008; Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998). McNally, Blake, Corbin, and Gray (2008) for example stress the importance of emotional involvement in the process of learning to teach.

Boyer (1990) in his book *Scholarship Reconsidered* states that "good teaching means that faculty, as scholars, are also learners" (p. 24). Learning to teach does not stop upon the completion of teacher education. Neither does it stop after being confirmed as a permanent teacher. Rather it is an ongoing process. Eisner (2002) suggests that "we need to treat teaching as a form of personal research" (p. 56). Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) describe teacher learning in terms of a number of relations between knowledge and

practice and distinguish knowledge for practice, knowledge in practice, and knowledge of practice for this purpose. van Eekelen, Boshuizen, and Vermunt (2005) point out that teachers learn during all kinds of day-to-day activities and often without any planning of learning process.

Most recently, constructivist views of teacher learning are being posited. From a constructivist perspective, teacher learning is seen as an interpretive process through which teachers make sense of their experiences by creating unique frameworks of knowledge (Resnick, 1991; Richardson, 1999). Labaree (2000) talks about teacher learning as being both natural and constructed. As such, learning to teach is constructive in nature in that teachers build on past experiences and frame future learning in the process of learning to teach.

Teacher educators' knowledge

Teachers educators' knowledge has been defined in many ways. Polanyi (1966) describes two kinds of human knowledge, i.e., 'explicit knowledge' and 'tacit knowledge'. Explicit knowledge is akin to what Clandinin and Connelly (2004) term as knowledge for teachers, something one can acquire as a possession, while tacit knowledge is knowledge that people carry in their minds and is, therefore, difficult to access (Polanyi, 1966, p. 8). These epistemological notions according to Clandinin and Connelly (2004) are "central to our understanding of teacher knowledge as experiential, as personal, as having a subjective quality and a pre-cognitive bodily basis that is expressed as tacit professional/cultural knowledge" (pp. 579-580).

Jarvis-Selinger, Collins, and Pratt (2007) suggest that "the types of knowledge to be taught (and learned) do influence the approach a teacher takes" (p. 67). They provide an example that illustrates differences not only in forms of knowledge, but in forms of teaching: they suggest the sciences are more concerned with transmitting instrumental knowledge, while disciplines that study human interactions were more often concerned with

facilitation of communicative knowledge (pp. 67-68). Hence teacher educators' teaching practice is also influenced by the subject they are teaching. Therefore teacher educators need to have mastery of subject-specific knowledge and skills in addition to being well informed in their subject area.

Different categories of knowledge have been identified or described in the literature including subject or content knowledge (Ormrod & Cole, 1996; Shulman, 1987), pedagogical content knowledge (Ormrod & Cole, 1996; Shulman, 1987), and practical knowledge (Clandinin, 1985; Clandinin & Connelly, 1996). Shulman (1986) identifies three types of knowledge: (a) subject matter content knowledge; (b) pedagogical content knowledge; and (c) curricular knowledge. Shulman (1986) refers content knowledge or subject matter knowledge to the amount and organisation of discipline knowledge in the mind of the teacher. Pedagogical content knowledge is related to subject matter knowledge for teaching, and curricular knowledge underlies the teacher's ability to relate the content of a given course of lesson to topics or issues being discussed simultaneously in other classes (p. 204). Of particular interest for Shulman is the pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), a combination of content and pedagogy (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2004b; Deng, 2007b). The key to the concept of PCK is the notion of transforming the subject matter—a notion that serves to characterise the capacity of a teacher to transform the subject matter knowledge he or she possesses for classroom teaching. Shulman (1987) pointed out that the knowledge base for effective teaching practice needs to include an array of knowledge categories and sources.

More recently Deng (2007b) critically examined the assumptions that underpin the concept of PCK. First, Deng examined the assumption that academic discipline is the primary source of what is taught in school. He refers to Shulman (1987) who indicates that scholarship in the content discipline provides "the knowledge, understanding, skills, and disposition

that are to be learned by school students" (pp. 8-9). This assumption suggests that teachers need to know the substance and structure of the academic discipline they are teaching. Second, Deng examined the assumption that in classroom teaching, a teacher necessarily transforms his or her subject matter of the academic discipline into the subject matter of the school subject. The transformation process is informed and shaped by the teachers' knowledge and beliefs about the purposes of schooling, about learners, about the school curriculum, about pedagogy, and about the school context (Wilson, Shulman, & Richert, 1987). In other words, transforming the subject matter of an academic discipline into the subject matter of a school subject is construed as an essential pedagogical task undertaken by an individual classroom teacher. An academic discipline provides the essential departure point for transformation. Issues of content, in other words, are viewed primarily as matters within an academic discipline. Shulman's notion of transformation allows a teacher to "eventually lift the curriculum away from texts and materials to give it independent existence" (p. 499). What seems to be obscured or undermined according to Deng (2007b) is "transformation as a curricular task that takes place before teachers transform their subject matter knowledge in their classrooms, in terms of the formation of a school subject or a course of study embodied in curriculum materials for the use of teachers and students" (p. 282). To Deng (2007a) it is important for visual art teacher educators to know about the subject matter they are supposed to teach and he argues that it is an important issue in teacher preparation, certification, and professional development (p. 503).

Zembylas' (2007) takes on Shulman's (1999) idea that while literature about teacher knowledge has helped us understand a great deal about how teachers carry out their work, less is known about teacher emotions and teachers interrelations with PCK in teaching and learning. The argument put forward in his study is that there is a need to expand current conceptions of PCK to acknowledge the role of emotional knowledge in teaching. His study showed

how a teacher's emotional knowledge about teaching and learning is an inextricable part of the ecosystem of teacher knowledge which he terms *emotional ecology.* This is where the construct of emotional ecology occurs on different planes as there are different types of emotional knowledge that are aspects of PCK. Zembylas argues that teacher knowledge is a form of knowledge ecology—a system consisting of many sources and forms of knowledge in a symbiotic relationship: content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, curriculum knowledge, knowledge of learners, emotional knowledge, knowledge of educational values and goals and so on. These forms of knowledge involve many agents—teachers, students, classrooms, resources, school, parents, community and so on; it is within this ecology that teaching and learning occur.

Clandinin and Connelly (2004) classify knowledge into two areas, teacher knowledge and knowledge for teachers. According to them, "in the view of knowledge for teachers, knowledge is seen as something teachers possess, something that they acquire from researchers, policy makers, and curriculum developers (p. 579). Teacher knowledge is "a knowledge that comes from experience, is learned in context, and is expressed in practice. Teachers' practice is their knowledge in action" (p. 579). Clandinin and Connelly (1985) explore the idea of teacher knowledge by conceptualising teacher knowledge as personal practical knowledge. By personal Clandinin and Connelly do not mean "idiosyncratic or private, but something that has both a personal and cultural origin and quality" (p. 579).

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2004a) distinguish three sets of relationships among inquiry, knowledge and practice. The three sets of relationships are: inquiry as a way to implement or codify for dissemination 'knowledge for-practice'; inquiry as a way to uncover and enhance 'knowledge-in-practice'; and inquiry as a way to generate local 'knowledge-of-practice' within inquiry communities (pp. 610-611). These authors describe knowledge for practice as what commonly has been referred as formal knowledge or the

knowledge base. Knowledge-in-practice focuses on what many people have called practical knowledge or, what practitioners know or come to know as it is embedded in the practice, in practitioners' reflections on practice, and/or in practitioners' narrative and autobiographical probing of practice. Knowledge-of-practice is understood as a way to enhance knowledge of teaching practice through inquiry.

In visual art education Eisner (2002) states that knowledge that is required by the art teacher [including the Visual art teacher educator] includes content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge. To Eisner (2000), the ability to engage students' imagination and knowledge of the technical requirements related to the use of materials, the ability to read the quality of students' work and to be able to talk to the students in a supportive and constructive way about the work are needed to teach art well. In addition, another form of pedagogical knowledge in teaching art which Eisner (2000) deems as critical is the need to make connections between earlier and current work and the world outside the classroom (pp. 55-56).

In sum, teachers' knowledge can be defined as something one can acquire as a possession, also known as 'explicit knowledge' and knowledge that people carry in their minds, also known as 'tacit knowledge'. There are also different categories of knowledge including subject or content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, emotional knowledge, and practical knowledge. These notions of teachers' knowledge are important to our understanding of teacher knowledge as experiential, as personal, as having a subjective quality and a pre-cognitive bodily basis that is expressed as tacit professional knowledge. These types of knowledge influence the approach a teacher takes.

Professionalism and Professionalisation

Traditionally, some aspects of professionalism have connotations of status and financial gains. As a result, it has been argued that professionals will

attempt to interpret a field's characteristics according to their own circumstances (Al-Hinai, 2006). Albee and Piveral (2003) suggest that educational professionalism involves educators being lifelong learners, reflective thinkers, and ethical leaders who exemplify the ideals of literacy, scholarship, and social justice in a diverse and ever-changing world. Hargreaves (2000) sees professionalism as improving quality and standards of practice. According to Helsby and McCulloch (1996), professionalism may be defined as "teachers' rights and obligations to determine their own tasks in the classroom, that is, to the way in which teachers develop, negotiate, use and control their own knowledge" (p. 56).

Professionalism is closely related to teacher educators' dispositions and the American National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (2001) has defined the disposition of a teacher educator as the values, commitments and professional ethics that influence behaviour toward students, families, colleagues, communities, and affect student learning, motivation, and development, as well as the educator's own professional growth. The dispositions or the characteristics of the teacher educator thus have a direct impact on all with whom he/she connects and also on their work.

The concept of professionalisation often refers to the status and standing of an occupation (Albee & Piveral, 2003). The idea of professionalisation in teaching has taken on very different meanings over the past century or so. Many parts of the world have witnessed several stages in the evolution of this concept with each phase carrying significant residue and traces from the past (Hargreaves, 2001a, p. 92). Professionalisation according to Marsh (1996) "is the process whereby members of a profession aspire to increasingly meet the criteria of their group" (p. 280). Professionalisation in teacher education is seen as one of the factors that influences teaching quality and it involves a complex process of acculturation. Through this process we learn to become researchers, teachers, and colleagues. As a sociological phenomenon it is generally understood to involve the

development of skills, identities, norms, and values associated with becoming part of a professional group (Levine, 2001). In education, teacher professionalisation is the movement to upgrade the status, training and working conditions of teachers (Ingersoll, Alsalam, Quinn, & Bobbitt, 1997).

In the literature concerning professionalisation, teacher educators' educational approaches are informed by both professional and personal skills (Armour & Fernandez-Balboa, 2001; Bell & Gilbert, 1994; Bellack, 2005; Kostogriz & Peeler, 2004; Radnor, 2002). Professional skills criteria are related to specific subject matter and pedagogical skills. The sufficiency of training received before the service is evaluated after the service. In Malaysia for example, in order for teacher educators to become permanent academic staff, they have to undergo an induction course, followed by a three years attachment basis where during this period teacher educators have to show their ability, commitment, and scholarship. Within this time frame all teacher educators in this category are required to complete a research project, and attend the Competency Level Assessment (Penilaian Tahap Kecekapan). At this point, every teacher educator needs not only to pass the test but also fulfil other requirements specified by the university which aim to increase the quality of visual art teacher educators. Despite many shortcomings in the profession of teaching in Malaysian teacher education, it can be argued that important attempts have been made to improve its quality and some improvements have been achieved in particular areas. The Ministry of Higher Education in Malaysia has long been striving for the better wellbeing of teacher educators. For example, the ministry has upgraded all the teacher education colleges into college university status, raised teacher educators' salaries, provided scholarships to pursue higher degrees, established a research centre, provided more allocation for teacher education, and turned a teacher education college into a university. The objectives of these reforms have been to improve the professionalisation of

teacher educators.

Stronach, Corbin, McNamara, Stark, and Warne (2002) describe a bind in which professionals are caught as, the 'economy of performance' and the 'ecologies of practice'. The economy of performance relates to the way in which professionals are assessed and evaluated whilst the ecologies of practice relates to their own beliefs and practices which have developed over time through their work. They argue that professional discourse has been colonised by policy makers (p. 71). Therefore, they query how far teaching can be viewed as a personal practice when programs of study and practice prescribed by curriculum policies are culturally derived and framed. For example, visual art teacher educators encourage their students to develop personal responses through personal investigation but are also expected to initiate students into conventional practices and techniques. In this sense Nicholls (2002) suggests that meaningful learning and reflective practice are more likely to occur when new and experienced academics engage with the pedagogic practice of their disciplines for its own sake, not for that of external demand (p. 51).

A study undertaken by Ailie and Brante (2007) draws on the influence of pressure from 'within' and from 'above' to professionalise. They suggest that one aspect of professionalisation is in how the use of a formal system of knowledge is important to operate as a professional and that comparisons with other professions may provide one way of beginning to understand the level of autonomy necessary to allow professionalism to grow in the work of teaching.

An important aspect that needs to be considered in any discussion related to enhancing professionalism is that of emotion. Researchers have investigated teachers' emotions in the context of educational reform (Adams, 2002; Darby, 2008; Fried, 2001; Hargreaves, 1998). Their findings demonstrate that issues of intrusion, administration, and pedagogical differences between teachers and administrators elicit both positive and negative emotions in

teachers. There can be no doubt that reforms can temporarily disturb the relative stability of teachers' work and, in some cases, their beliefs, practices and self-efficacy (Bottery, 2005; Goodson & Hargreaves, 1996; Sachs, 2003). Darby (2008) undertook a study that sought to examine teachers' specific emotions during critical incidents that occurred during a period of reform and to explore the reconstruction of their professional self-understanding. Findings illustrate that the teachers experienced fear and intimidation when their professional self-understandings were challenged. However, with the support of a literacy coach and the administration of the faculty they reconstructed these self-understandings, leading to improvements in student achievement and their own instructional practices. These positive changes led to the teachers experiencing the emotions of pride and excitement.

Veen and Lasky (2005) stress the importance of understanding the relationships between visual art teacher educators' emotion, professional identity, and educational change. According to them, "the analysis of teachers' emotions while implementing reforms can provide deeper understanding of the ways teachers experience their work and educational change, and can thus inform such areas as change theory and professional development'' (p. 895). Veen and Lasky believe that emotions relate to the nature of teaching and learning. Visual art teacher educators "often so closely merge their sense of personal and professional identity that the classroom becomes a main site for their self-esteem and fulfilment, and so too for their vulnerability" (Nias, 1996, p. 297). Emotion and cognition are understood by some researchers to be inextricably interconnected and are thus difficult to separate (Frijda, 2000; Nias, 1996). The claim that is made in some studies on teachers' emotions is that taking these into account will provide for greater understanding of teachers' learning and thinking. Furthermore, if teaching and learning have an emotional dimension, then it is necessary to explore the emotional and cognitive aspects of both (Veen & Lasky, 2005, pp. 895-896). Hargreaves (2001b) argues that emotions are not

only the product of the nature of teaching or personal disposition and commitment, but also of how particular ways of organizing teaching shape teachers' emotions. Hence exploring emotions in teaching and teachers' professional lives is seen as important in the professionalisation of teacher educators.

D'Andrea and Gosling (2005) contend that professionalisation can be counterproductive. They highlighted a number of reasons why academics have reservations about the professionalisation of teaching in higher education. The first reason is the concern that a strong discipline-based professional identity that the majority of academics have could be diluted or threatened by any attempt to impose the generic professional category of 'teacher'. Secondly, there is a suspicion that a trend towards professionalisation "is yet another form of social control and regulation and by implication a reduction of trust in academics to self-regulate, because the current levels of professional knowledge and skills of teachers in higher education are assumed to be inadequate" (p. 64). Thirdly, there is a concern that professionalisation will "lead to greater uniformity and therefore mediocrity" (p. 64). Thus they propose three ways to enhance professionalisation which in turn enhance teaching quality: recognising that professionalisation is in line with academic traditions of critical inquiry and scholarship; recognising the variations in roles and functions of teachers within diverse institutional types; and recognising the unique learning processes of all involved.

In sum, professionalism and professionalisation are closely inter-related and what could be an effort to enhance professionalism could affect professionalisation and vice-versa. The importance of emotion, which is interwoven with issues of power and identity need to be addressed in an appropriate manner to prevent teachers from being victimised or demoralised. Types of learning such as self-study, reflection and reflective practice, professional development, collaborative and cooperative learning,

peer learning and practitioner inquiry are seen as pertinent to ensure professionalism and professionalisation are properly understood. Lifelong learning which is both formal and non-formal (Daniel, 2005) is a good example of this inter-relatedness of professionalism and professionalisation and will be discussed further in the following section.

Lifelong learning

An old adage states: "The truly educated never graduate". This maxim has come to exemplify the rationale for the interest in lifelong learning and has become part of the lexicon of the higher education world. Barnes (1998) states that, "...good teaching is a form of learning" (p. xii). The emerging knowledge-based economy, according to Clark and Shatkin (2003) essentially forces one to embrace lifelong learning to stay viable in life and in the workplace. Knapper and Cropley (2000) state that,

> The single crucial element in the notion of lifelong education is to be found in the word 'lifelong': it embraces a set of guidelines for developing educational practice ('education') in order to foster learning throughout life ('lifelong'). Lifelong education thus defines a set of organisational, administrative, methodological and procedural measures which accept the importance of promoting lifelong learning. (p. 9)

Kiley and Cannon (2000) state that, "In essence, the basic idea behind the term 'lifelong learning' is that deliberate, focused learning does and should occur throughout a person's lifetime" (p. 2). They suggest a few approaches for lifelong learning to be successful. The approaches that they consider as crucial are that a focus on learning should be on students and they should be equipped with the attitudes and skills to learn for themselves both in formal education and long after they have graduated. Kiley and Cannon believe that lifelong learning occurs in a wide variety of contexts in the university's

academic and non-academic settings, and beyond, in the community, the workplace and the family (i.e. 'lifewide learning'). In a world of confusing educational jargon, it may help to think of lifelong learning as a broad educational goal rather than an educational process.

Self-Study

Clandinin and Connelly (2004) suggest that teacher educators need to pursue self-study in order to develop. For Clandinin and Connelly, "Self-study must somehow give an account of the living of the teacher in action, rather than merely the verbal (whether written or spoken) accounts of action" (p. 582). Clandinin and Connelly specify three types of self-study. The first kind of self-study is work that engages someone in studying himself or herself in order to learn something about their own teaching. This type of self-study emphasises the personal and is closest to what Clandinin and Connelly imagine as the personal-social continuum. The second type emphasises the personal-social continuum that moves somewhat away from personal toward the social. This type of self-study involves someone studying themselves in relation to their social environment in order to learn something about themselves and to change some aspects of their practices. The third type is where a researcher sets out to study something else and in the process of doing so learns something about themselves (pp. 583-589).

Clandinin and Connelly (2004) further assert that self-studies of teacher knowledge become studies of professional knowledge in two ways. In the first, the researcher in each self-study transforms his or her personal practical knowledge into professional knowledge as they 'restory' their knowing within their particular social, cultural and institutional narrative. In the second way, each researcher in a self-study transforms his/her personal practical knowledge within the unique professional setting to resonate with others' professional knowledge in teaching (pp. 593-594). Whichever way, educators have come to embrace the notion of self-study and this field has

spawned a diversity of practices across a range of settings.

Reflection and reflective practice

There has been a recent resurgence of interest in the notions of 'reflection' and 'reflective practice' in teacher education (Green, 2001; Groundwater-Smith, Ewing, & Cornu, 2003; McIntyre, 1992; Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004; Schön, 1983). Reflection is undertaken not so much to revisit the past but rather to guide future action (Brubacher, Case, & Reagan, 1994). Dewey (1933) defines reflection as a proactive, ongoing examination of beliefs and practices, their origins, and their impacts. Dewey (1938) suggests that experiences influence teacher beliefs and, once these beliefs are reflected upon critically, provide the basis for professional growth (pp. 38-39).

However, according to McNay and Graham (2007) reflection is a term that is rarely defined with precision. The term and its variants—reflective teaching, reflective practice, critical reflection, and so on tend to be used freely, loosely, and decidedly uncritically. Furthermore, reflective practices tend to privilege what teachers already know, to reinforce existing beliefs rather than challenge them (Loughran, 2006), and to ignore issues of systemic injustice in favour of technical analysis (Valli, 1992).

McIntyre (1992) argues that there are three levels of reflection: *technical, practical*, and *critical*. Technical reflection has to do with acquiring a repertoire of skills, while practical reflection has to do with understanding the nature of the subject and its method of inquiry. Critical reflection is the process of analysing, reconsidering and questioning experiences within a broad context of issues in order to gain a better understanding of something.

Reflection is an essential skill for teachers as it is a means of turning back to experience in the moments of teaching or after teaching (reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action respectively) in order to improve the choices that are made and to further or abandon the direction of that experience (Latham

et al., 2006, p. xvi). Reflection has become an important theoretical framework used by those who work in the area of teacher education and professional development. This is because "Habitual practices are so ingrained we can forget sometimes to think about, much less to challenge them" (Latham et al., 2006, p. viii) and "one way to curb this habitual cycle is to engage in critical reflection" (ibid., p. xv).

Reflective practice is essential to professionalising the field of education and is a fundamental building block of an inquiry orientation to teaching (Dana & Yendol-Silva, 2003). Reflective practice is viewed by many as an essential feature of contemporary teacher education and development (Chak, 2006; Conway & Clark, 2003; Leitch & Day, 2001; Leshem & Trafford, 2006; Tomlinsen, 1995; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). Reflective practice is a vehicle that allows teachers to explore, contemplate, and analyse experiences in the classroom (Murray & Lafrenz, 2006). Reflecting on experiences helps individuals improve their actions and professional practice (Kolb, 2000; Schön, 1983). According to Osterman and Kottkamp (1993), "reflective practice is a means by which practitioners can develop a greater level of self-awareness about the nature and impact of their performance" (p. 19). This awareness of one's performance makes individuals think about and mull over their experiences, classroom activities, and assignments, leading to improved practice.

Redden, Simon, and Aulls (2007) suggest the integration of theoretical and practical knowledge and the eventual ability to be a critically reflective practitioner are logical aims for teacher education programs. 'Teacher as learner', 'Teacher as researcher', and 'Teacher as reflective practitioner' are some of the terms that are used currently to signify the changes that have occurred in conceptualizing teaching (Groundwater-Smith, Ewing, & Cornu, 2003, p. 160). A basic tenet of these approaches assumes that when teachers consciously engage in practices that examine their own experiences, beliefs and pedagogical understandings, there can be a more effective bridging

between theory and practice and improved teaching performance will be an outcome (Knight, 2006; McGregor, 2007). According to Knight (2006), as teacher educators, we need to ask ourselves a number of critical questions that focus on self, students, curriculum and teaching, and the learning environment. By challenging our values, beliefs, and assumptions, we begin to resist the limitations they impose on our worldview. Because teachers are in a position to model and inspire learners to adopt a critical point of view, an important first step for teachers is to examine and analyse their own values and perspectives.

Carpenter (2006) categorises reflection in two ways: internal and external. Internal reflection according to him is "a personal, internal exchange", while external reflection provides "additional insights that are unavailable to exclusively internal reflection" (p. 4). We engage in this type of reflection constantly. In general, teachers are encouraged to collectively reflect on their practices to ensure that they are aligned with their student's physical, cognitive and social development and promote an adult community atmosphere (Sheffield et al., 2005, p. 217). Eisner (2002) looks at self-reflection as seldom sufficient though it is important. This is because "we often simply don't know what we are unaware of" (p. 56) and reflection is a difficult process that requires critical thought, self-direction, and problem solving coupled with personal knowledge and self-awareness (Elliott, 1991, cited in Chant, Heafner, & Bennett, 2004, p. 25).

Knight (2006) feels that "reflexivity is not episodic. It is a process that entails a lifelong commitment to continuous improvement, constant review, and consistent refinement." (p. 40). This is in line with Groundwater-Smith, Ewing, and Cornu (2003) who state that "reflection is not an end in itself. It is a means towards the development of ethical judgments and strategic actions" (p. 160). Opportunities to reflect on and practice new ideas and strategies, and receive feedback on performance, are identified as vital components in effective professional development (Ingvarson, Meiers, &

Beavis, 2005). This feedback may come from a mentor or a supporting teacher and links to elements of Brookfield's 'lenses' used in critical reflection (Brookfield, 1995).

Brookfield (1995) argues that educators should endeavour to examine their practice from a variety of sources, which he links to four different 'lenses': Autobiographical, colleagues' experiences, students' eyes and theoretical literature. The first lens, our autobiographies, refers to how educators as learners draw great insights into how we teach by examining our own learning. Referring to our biographies puts us in the role of other, so we can stand back from our own experience and view it more objectively. The second lens, colleagues' experiences, allows us to check, reframe, and broaden our own theories of practice, and to consider new ideas, ways of doing things, and problem-solving approaches that we might not have thought of ourselves. Such practices make us aware that we share common problems and issues, which can be profoundly reassuring and can also suggest ways we can work together to overcome these challenges. The third lens is seeing ourselves through our students' eyes. It allows us to check student understanding and find out whether they are hearing what we intended them to hear and allows us to become aware of the diversity of meanings students interpret from our actions. The fourth lens, the theoretical literature helps us to extend our understanding and appreciation of our own learning and teaching practice by offering interpretive frameworks. It can provide multiple perspectives on similar situations that seem challenging in different ways, and it can help us to maintain perspective by indicating that what we see as personal failings might arise from broader economic, social, and political processes. For Brookfield, it is through the critical reflection of these lenses that teachers can identify and consider the appropriateness of the assumptions that guide their teaching practices.

Reflective practice is considered by the teaching profession to be "a generic component of good teaching" (Korthagen, 2001, p. 51). Being a reflective

educator means that our knowledge of teaching is never conclusive and it must be "subjected to careful reconsideration in light of information from current theory and practice, from feedback from the particular context, and from speculation as to the moral and ethical [and political] consequences of their results" (LaBoskey, 1994, p. 9).

Professional development

The ultimate goal of professional development is enhanced learning for all students (Darling-Hammond, 2000). In defining professional development, Guskey (2002) emphasised this goal by equating professional development with "those processes and activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes of educators so that they might, in turn, improve the learning of students" (p. 16). Costello (1991) contends that professional development is the process of growth in competence and maturity through which teachers add range, depth and quality to their performance of the professional tasks. Marsh (1996) concurs with Costello that professional development is the process whereby "members go about improving their competencies" (p. 280). Professional development can be maximised if a supportive environment is provided and members of the institution give their personal commitment.

Professional development is considered to be one of the most effective ways to improve teaching and learning practice. Nielsen, Barry and Staab (2008) for example in their recent study discovered that teachers described three conditions that supported their professional growth and subsequent change. First, teachers believed they learned more when professional development was embedded within their school and classroom contexts. Second, teachers said they learned more when professional development focused on a limited number of clearly defined learning goals and provided opportunities for deep learning. Third, teachers wanted on-demand access to time and resources that directly supported their learning.

Despite the popular belief that professional development enhances teachers' competency, Nielsen, Barry and Staab (2008) contend that the influence on teacher knowledge and instructional practice remains unclear. In particular, they argue that researchers investigating instructional reform initiatives rarely examine teachers' views about change and the professional development that supports the change process (Le Fevre & Richardson, 2002; Tye, 2000). It is suggested by some that we know little about how teachers learn to teach or how they believe they become more effective teachers. Instead, as Weinstein and McKown (1998) have suggested, teachers "appear almost as 'black boxes' into which expectations are induced or measured and outputs (teacher behaviours and student achievement) are assessed" (p. 218). This is essentially a top-down model. Thus, teachers are recipients of the knowledge shared by a researcher or other outsider, and are expected to adapt to the changes outlined. Nielsen, Barry and Staab (2008) see such an approach as problematic.

D'Andrea and Gosling (2005) emphasised the importance of being clear about the goals of professional development. They suggest that we should take note of the distinctive values of higher education in planning any developmental activity. To D'Andrea and Gosling, "Formal acquisition of pedagogical knowledge is only a small part of these learning processes. It is more important to identify activities, all of which can be seen as a form of professional development" (p. 66).

In conclusion, professional development is seen as a tool to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Professional development has the elements to help the process of growth in competence and maturity of teacher educators and hence improves their teaching performance. On the other hand, professional development can also be a waste of time, money, and effort when it is inappropriately conducted.

Peer learning

Vygotsky (1978) advocates that learning is shaped by socio-cultural influences, arguing that "human learning presupposes a specific social nature and a process by which children [also adults] grow into the intellectual life of those around them" (p. 88). From a Vygotskian perspective, learning is an aspect of a person's participation in social practice: that is, social interaction with others. What he or she "can do with the assistance of others [is] in some sense even more indicative of their mental development than what they can do alone" (Vygotsky 1978, p. 85). This implies that knowledge may not necessarily be absolute but that it is a shared understanding between people who are engaging in communication, learning, working, and living together. Based on this perspective, knowledge is mediated and can be contested. When people participate in joint social practice that is more advanced than what they can do independently, they are working in a *zone of proximal development*. Vygotsky (1978) defines the zone of proximal development as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 86). Thinking about learning from this perspective recognises that in general people are social creatures and that learning is contextualised (Latham et al., 2006, p. 203).

Cornbleth (2008) uses the term 'climates of opinion' as a socio-cultural influence on teaching practice. She contends that ideas, widely and strongly held, and 'social forces' are mutually constitutive and can be usefully considered as climates of opinion. She has come to see teachers as mediators or interpreters (or negotiators) of various social conditions, trends, events, and national-state-local priorities (p. 145).

The belief that learning is social and contextualised is also recognised by Schuck and Segal (2002) who state that "learning is a socio-cultural activity,

mediated by group interaction" (p. 90). Hence the aim of peer learning is to acquire knowledge and/or skill by study, experience, or teaching (Topping & Ehly, 1998) and that encompasses both formal and informal contexts of learning. Latham et al. (2006) contend that "Peer learning is diverse, engaging in multiple strategies, practices, and theories" (p. 208).

In relation to this research, peer learning is seen as a way to improve knowledge and teaching skills. Recent writings about peer learning centre on ideas about collaboration, communities of practice, mentorship, and other descriptors of peer interaction, and can be seen as a continuum between co-operative learning and collaborative learning (Barkley, Cross, & Major, 2005; Boud, Cohen, & Sampson, 2001). A key difference of collaborative learning and cooperative learning is that in collaborative learning there is a shift in the authority and power of learning from the teacher to students as opposed to co-operative learning (Latham et al., 2006, p. 207).

Co-operative learning

Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec (1998) define co-operative learning as "the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximise their own and others' learning (p. 15). Killen (2007) more recently states that, "Co-operative learning is an instructional technique in which learners work together in small groups to help one another achieve a common learning goal" (p. 181). Co-operative learning is a highly structured teaching strategy that capitalises on the fact that many students learn better in the midst of interaction with their peers (Williams, 2007). Co-operative learning is not so much learning to co-operate as it is cooperating to learn (Wong & Wong, 1998). While it is recognised that learning can be individual and competitive, it is co-operative learning that focuses on enhancing learning from the synergies created by people working and learning together (Latham et al. 2006, p. 204).

Stahl (1997) concurs that the main reason for having students work in co-

operative groups is that all students can be more academically successful as individuals than they would be if they worked alone. Most advocates of co-operative learning stress that it is an effective way to promote learning and it promotes positive peer interactions and relationships (Johnson & Johnson, 1999; Killen, 2007; Slavin, 1995; Stahl, 1997). A study by Garvie (1994) found that teachers who use co-operative learning are likely to be more enthusiastic about teaching than those who do not use it.

In conclusion, co-operative learning is seen as an effective strategy for enabling students to achieve a wide range of academic and social outcomes including enhanced achievement, improved self-esteem, positive interpersonal relationships, improved time-management skills, and positive attitudes towards learning. Many of the outcomes can be achieved concurrently, rather than being developed in isolation (Killen, 2007). However, it is important to understand that co-operative learning is not simply a matter of putting students into groups to learn but to get the students to work as a team, exchange ideas, think critically, and help one another to learn.

Collaborative learning

UNESCO (2000) defines collaborative learning as the act of shared creation and/or discovery when learners work in groups on the same task simultaneously, thinking together over demands and tackling complexities (p. 1). Collaborative learning is often embedded in communities with adolescent or adult learners (Barkley, Cross, & Major, 2005; Boud, Cohen, & Sampson, 2001; Brufee, 1995). In collaborative learning, there is an underlying assumption that adolescent or adult learners bring some degree of experiences, skills, and knowledge related to how to work cooperatively. In this sense, cooperative learning prepares people for collaborative learning and working towards collaboration.

Collaborative partnerships for learning between teacher educators and

student teachers can be a challenging notion depending on how the term 'collaborative' is viewed. Realising the importance of collaborative partnerships in teacher education, Jones (2008) proposed a collaborative learning model for teachers and pre-service teachers within the context of Science. In the model both the teacher educators and student teachers are considered learners as the teachers are pursuing professional development and the pre-service teachers are actively contributing to their pre-service education course. The term professional learning is thus adopted to describe the learning that both partners undertake specific to the partnership, and represents the learning that would otherwise be considered part of professional development for teachers and part of coursework for pre-service teachers. The lessons are the result of shared knowledge and ideas and implementation and reflection is a result of the combined effort of both teacher educators and student teachers in the partnership.

Another aspect of collaboration is co-teaching. Co-teaching according to Bessette (2008) involves technical, interpersonal, and pedagogical responsibilities; and opportunities for professional development and growth for students and teachers. Friend and Cook (2003) describe six distinct approaches to co-teaching that serve as a framework for identifying instructional models within co-teaching: (a) one teach, one observe; (b) one teach, one drift; (c) alternative teaching; (d) parallel teaching; (e) station teaching; and (f) team teaching. In the one teach, one observe approach, co-teachers have an opportunity to learn from each other. The one teach, one drift approach is perhaps more commonly observed in classrooms, where one person has primary responsibility for teaching while the other teacher circulates throughout the room providing assistance to students as needed.

Parallel teaching occurs when co-teachers divide the class and teach the same information simultaneously. This is done to facilitate greater interaction between student and teacher. In the station teaching approach, co-teachers divide the content and their students. For example, one co-

teacher might teach the content to one group and subsequently repeat the instruction for another, or even, third group of students if appropriate. Finally, there is team teaching, perhaps the most difficult approach, dependent upon co-teachers' ability to deliver instruction 'tag team' style. This approach, often considered the gold standard for co-teachers, is heavily dependent upon teaching styles, learning philosophies, interpersonal skills, and shared experiences.

Summary

From the discussion above, good teaching in teacher education is closely related to the teacher educators' work, identities, certification, knowledge and skills. Professionalism and professionalisation of teacher educators are factors that contribute to good teaching in teacher education. Lifelong learning is seen as a way for teacher educators to keep on progressing and includes strategies such as self-study, reflection and reflective practice, professional development, peer learning, self-study, cooperative learning, and collaborative learning.

Good teaching in art teacher education

The teaching of art has been characterised by continuing tensions. Siegesmund (1998) in his article entitled "Why do we teach art today" states that there is no lack of contemporary debate over the aims and outcomes of art education. Debates range from the way art is conceptualised (Eisner, 1988; Eisner, 2002b; Kornhaber, Krechevsky, & Gardner, 1990; Neperud, 1995) to specific approaches to classroom practice (Burton, Lederman, & London, 1988; Clark, 1987; Wright, 2003).

Good visual art teaching according to Eisner (2002) includes the ability to engage students' imagination and the technical requirements related to the use of materials. Visual art teachers need to know how those materials can

be handled (p. 53). In terms of assessment, visual art teachers also need to have the ability to understand their students' work and "to be able to talk to the student in a supportive and constructive way about the work" (p. 54). In addition, pedagogical skill requires teachers to model the kind of language and skill students are expected to learn and to demonstrate the process of art making. Another pedagogical skill needed for good visual art teaching is to know how to acquire and arrange the tools and materials students need to use. Without such knowledge, the classroom can be chaotic. Eisner (2000) also suggests teachers need to have the ability to make connections between students' earlier work and current work and between current work and the world outside the classroom (p. 55). This means that specific knowledge and skills, and pedagogical skill are required to ensure good visual art teaching. Thus this takes us back to Shulman's (2004) concept of pedagogical content knowledge where he believes that teachers need to combine specific knowledge and skills and pedagogical skill to teach more effectively.

Grauer (1999) states that one of the major aims of a visual art teacher education program is "to expand the prospective teachers' understanding of the goals of the field and the way these goals might be achieved" (p. 19). In order to achieve this aim, programs and courses should be planned to introduce prospective teachers to ideas about curriculum, instruction and what constitutes artistic learning, hoping through this process to enlighten and enable them to become effective in the classroom. Grauer believes that teacher education in art should be "more than the training of specific skills and knowledge" (p. 19) because to him,

> It is not enough for teachers to be capable of replicating their own education in art, or even of promoting the status quo in schools. Rather, teachers should be able to reflect on their own understanding in light of the values and theories that are part of the field of art education. (p. 19)

In the following section, I shall examine a number of key developments in

visual art education. These developments are worth investigating as each continues to shape art education thus influencing visual art teacher educators' beliefs, values, and teaching practice, and, their perceptions of what constitutes good teaching in visual art teacher education.

The development of visual art education

The emergence of visual art education within academic discourse has "a history of shifting rationales" (Eisner & Day, 2004, p. 5). The development of visual art education reflects "conflicting sets of values that abound in pluralistic societies, in the worlds of art, and the worlds of education" (Pierre & Zimmerman, 1997, p. 2). Continuous change has historically characterised the field of visual art education and "has been driven not so much by any new knowledge of children, art or education, but rather by shifts in the social beliefs and educational priorities of the times" (Dorn, 1994, p. 1).

The initial forays into the teaching of visual art according to Eisner and Day (2004) emerged in America around the middle of the 19th century and were largely practical in orientation. Visual art education enabled manufacturers to find able apprentices, trained in drawing, who could contribute to the success of their business (p. 1). In other parts of the world, prior to the early 1920s, visual art education programs in public schools, particularly in England, Canada, Germany, Australia, and New Zealand, focussed on the same orientation as in America, which was practical and technical education (Chalmers, 1990; Efland, 1992; Hamblen, 1985; Haney, 1908; Soucy, 1990). The most powerful influence in visual art education came from the South Kensington School in England. The South Kensington philosophy of visual art education drew from German ideologies, which tended toward utilitarianism. This utilitarian-based visual art education approach focused on developing skill in art through imitation, drill, and practice (Anderson, 1997a; Efland, 1990; McDonald, 1970; Soucy, 1990; Stankiewicz, 1990), an

approach that aimed to prepare skilled artisans.

Throughout the first half of the 20th century, the general orientation of the field of visual art education was focused on matters of craft, on the making of beautiful images, and on the development of creativity, especially in young children (Eisner & Day, p. 1). *Creative self-expression* which emerged in the 1920s, and became the dominant mode of visual art teaching after World War II, was influenced by the Romantic writers such as Rousseau on visual arts education practice and was clearly evident through the work of Franz Cizek who developed the concept of 'Child Art'. The factor that contributed to the rise of this progressive movement according to Efland (1990) was a "general reaction against the excessive formalism that had been imposed upon schooling as a result of scientific management procedures" (p. 120). Creative self-expression focused on the mental growth and self-expression that promised to free the individual from social and psychological repressions by allowing the imagination to bloom in much the way that artists of the last century freed themselves from academic rules and restraints (Efland, 1992; Lowenfeld, 1958). The most influential of these instrumental theories were those of Victor Lowenfeld (1947), who believed that the purpose of art education was to contribute to human development, and Herbert Read (1945) who believed that education through art could lead to universal peace.

Criticism of an approach centring the whole of education towards the fulfilment of children's needs, including the need for self expression, emerged during the Great Depression (1929-1941) when the need for social cohesion became critical. The result of this creative self-expression in the eyes of some was not increased freedom but a strong anti-intellectualism (Efland, 1992; Greer, 1997). Eisner (2002b) notes that the view of the teacher's role as a kind of 'pedagogy by neglect' assumes that intelligent teaching is unlikely or that teachers have too little to teach (p. 233). He argues that an "unassisted course of maturation is morally irresponsible; the

teacher's task is to design environments that promote the educational development of the young" (p. 234).

Beginning in 1968, a new paradigm for thinking about art education emerged to challenge ideas that arose during the modern era. This new paradigm known as *postmodernism* does not merely chronologically follow modernism, it reacts against modernism (Barrett, 1997a, p. 17). According to Danto (1981), "late modernist theory, shaped especially by Greenbergian formalism, is viewed by postmodernists as too narrow and restrictive to account for the range of objects contemporary philosophy and theory validates as art" (Cited in Hutchens & Suggs, 1997, p. 7). A major challenge to modernism has been the discourse of feminists, multiculturalists and social revisionists. Formal issues and objectivism are no longer central to investigation (Hutchens & Suggs, 1997, p. 10). Whilst visual art educators seemed united in their desire to distance themselves from a child-centred approach they yet were divided over what new direction the field should take. Among the many proposals for new directions were Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE), Arts Propel and multiculturalism/social construction (Barrett, 2003; Gardner, 1989; Goodman, 1978; Greer, 1997; Hobbs, 1997), structuralism and post structuralism.

The pioneer and chief advocate of the DBAE approach, the Getty Education Institute for the Arts, recommends this approach as an effective means by which students experience the visual arts in a variety of ways. Advocates of DBAE claim that it provides a more comprehensive approach to art education than any other approach (Eisner, 2002b, p. 27). One of the premises guiding the Getty Education Institute's programs is that the creation of artworks and inquiry into the meaning of the arts are the primary means through which we understand human experiences and transmit cultural values. Consequently, the visual arts should be an essential part of every child's education (Greer, 1997). Visual art teacher educators who adopt the DBAE approach integrate content from four disciplines—art

production, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics and address "things that people do in art: they make it, they appreciate its qualities, they locate its place in culture over time, and they discuss and justify their judgments about its nature, merits, and importance" (Eisner, 2002b, p. 27). These disciplines provide knowledge, skills, and understandings that enable students to have a rich and broad experience with works of art.

As DBAE was implemented and its operational characteristics became visible, criticisms and reactions also emerged. Proponents of child-centred instruction objected to DBAE on the basis that it ignored individuality, the possibilities of idiosyncratic artistic responses, and the holistic nature of art learning (Burton, Lederman, & London, 1988). DBAE was also criticised on the grounds that the theory emphasised western fine art, artistic exemplars, and formalistic lessons (Blandy & Congdon, 1987). Other criticism included that DBAE too closely resembled the rest of education in its emphasis on sequential instruction, predictable outcomes, and testable learning (Hamblen, 1988) with learning outcomes to be tested in the same manner that other subject areas are tested. In response to these criticisms Dobbs (1988) attempted to safeguard the status-quo of child-centred instruction and studio production. However, to keep pace with the need for a more inclusive art education and in conjunction with developments of postmodernism and educational reform, Neo-DBAE was formulated. Neo-DBAE in many respects according to Hamblen (1997) is a response to such post-modern manifestations as multiculturalism, pro-activism, and contextualism (p. 45). The evolution from DBAE to Neo-DBAE acknowledges the fact that DBAE "must evolve to remain educationally relevant" (Dunn, 1993 cited in Hamblen, 1997, p. 45). In Neo-DBAE art can be taught separately from other subject areas or can be integrated into them in order to improve student learning.

The emergence of structuralism and post-structuralism as two compelling intellectual movements after World War II has enriched the art education

world. Structuralist theory was heavily influenced by the early semiotic theory of linguist Ferdinand de Saussure who attempted to explain phenomena by identifying hidden systems. According to Barrett (1997), structuralists, like modernists, believe in searching for universal truth. However, the structuralists sought to discover unconscious codes or rules that underlie phenomena to make visible systems that were previously invisible. This was achieved through examining a phenomenon in relation to other synchronous phenomena. On the other hand, poststructuralists influenced by Jacques Derrida, reject the idea of autonomous subject, insisting that no one can live outside of history. Poststructuralists criticise structuralists for their scientific mannerism, their search for universal truth and their belief in an unchanging human nature. Poststructuralists stress that language, culture, and society are arbitrary and conventionally agreed upon and should not be considered as natural (Barrett, 1997, p. 19).

Another attempt was to look at art as a form of inquiry. Founded in 1967 by Nelson Goodman, Arts Propel aimed to introduce students to approaches to the art form along three pathways that give Arts Propel its name: production—students are inspired to learn the basic skills and principles of the art form by putting their ideas into visual form; perception—students study works of art to understand the kinds of choices artists make and to see connections between their own and others' work; and reflection—students assess their work according to personal goals and standards of excellence in the field (Gardner, 1989).

Visual art teaching is now seen as more than simply the production of artistic objects (Danto, 1981; Darts, 2006). There is also a shift in the contemporary art world away from an emphasis on materials, techniques, and objects and towards a focus on concepts, problems, and ideas (Danto, 1981). Darts (2006) for example although teaching skills of artistic production as an important element for his students, emphasises that the teaching of formal skills should not supersede the interpretation of artistic

objects and the exploration of related sociocultural issues (p. 7). This is in line with the goals of art education as posited by Efland (2004) who states that art education should provide "the freedom to explore multiple forms of visual culture to enable students to understand social and cultural influences affecting their lives" (p. 250).

Based on the development of visual art education, we can clearly see that the conceptions of visual art teaching evolve and change. These conceptions have influenced visual art teaching in various ways which include the preparation of students for the industrial work place in the 19th century and a focus on the development of individual creativity in the early 20th century. Visual art education has also experienced the discipline-based art education approach of the 1980s and 1990s, and the more recent interest in art as a way to enhance moral development or improve aesthetic decisions in everyday living, to integrate the personality, and to teach aesthetics in combination with the other arts (Hamblen, 1988; Hamblen, 1997; Lovano-Kerr, 1990). In many cases, the goals for visual art education have been instrumental in character. These goals of visual art education reflect much of our current thinking about the content and outcomes of visual art education. In conclusion, knowing where visual art education has been in the past can assist in making wiser decisions in the future. A knowledge of visual art education history as Chalmers (2004) states, "helps us to clarify contested ideas, and helps us to formulate questions to be asked about the present and future of art education" (p. 11).

The theory and practice of visual art education in higher education

The theory and practice of visual art education in higher education settings are characterised by continuing tensions and debates. One of these debates concerns the issue of process-product and reflects in part the debates in visual art education in pre-tertiary settings evidenced in movements such as

DBAE and Arts Propel. This debate has been ongoing for many decades. Henry Miller (1952) in his seminal book *Wisdom of the Heart*, believes that the practice of art is not an end in itself but part of process (cited in Field, 1972, p. 107). Barret (1979) agrees with Miller when he states, "I see art as a process rather than artefact. It is something which can be recognized only in its entirety or unity..." (p. 4).

History indicates that different approaches to visual art teaching have caused division in the visual art education world. For example Gaitskell (1953), Saunders (1954), and Tait (1957) believe that good visual art teaching is that which emphasises the development of the child rather than the art produced. Walter Smith's Art Education program was influenced by the South Kensington National Art Training School's and was grounded upon the demand by business to form a working class more suited for industrial needs (Soucy, 1990, p. 4). On the other hand, Harris (1897) believes that "instruction in art could be harnessed by educators for the purposes of social control" (cited in Efland, 1990, p. 118). Harris was very much influenced by John Ruskin's (1866) idea of romantic idealism and social efficiency[9].

Anderson, Eisner, and McRorie (1998) conclude that two approaches to learning and teaching art dominate graduate programs—a comprehensive approach such as discipline-based art education and a studio-based artist-teacher approach. This kind of student-directed learning is related to Arts PROPEL where students approach the art form based on production, perception, and reflection. Korzenik (1998) states that,

> This relatively new rivalry between studio and education faculties in *art* puts artists and art educators in impossible positions. Ambivalence was institutionalised. Artists in the college studios, where they taught for much of the year,

[9] John Ruskin (1966) believed that no one could invent by rules. Their only function was to aid in the analysis of one's own work and the work of better artists (p. 169).

> had to downplay their interest in teaching. Artists who chose to be educators had to study psychology, and also resist being too involved with teaching! (p. 206)

Research by Ashton (1999) into generalist teacher discourses reveals similar scenarios. It appears that visual art teachers have tended to cling to one of two dominant and contrasting post World War II approaches. The first preaches 'natural processes', and 'creative self-expression' through child-centred pedagogy. The second approach, a mutation of Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE), is much more content directed. These opposing views caused turbulence in the art world whereby "the world of art and the world of art education are, unfortunately, in separate(ed) camps" (Luca & Kent, 1968, p. v). Their aims and purposes, contexts and modes of working, and ultimate commitments are different to each other.

In the Malaysian educational context, one of the major influences on visual art education theory and practice has been the legacy of British colonialism and other cross-cultural conditions. The teachers' training college curriculum was derived from European sources and transformed in the Malaysian context. The theories and techniques of Western-style painters that emphasised true representation of reality continued to be pursued. The notions of modernism permeated the Malaysian higher education setting in the 1980s largely due to the introduction of modern art by lecturers and visual art teacher educators who studied overseas. A good example was Dato' Syed Ahmad Jamal who introduced abstract art in the education system. As a principal force in education and the local art scene from the time of Independence on 31st August 1957, he is the most senior of a core of artists who studied in the west and returned as champions of Abstract Expressionism in the 1960s, ushering in a new and dominant force in Malaysian Art (http://www.artsasia.com.my/exhibits /05rare/syed.html).

Eisner's (2002) ideas of visual art teaching seem relevant to the current

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thinking of visual art education theory and practice. Eisner (2002) in his book *The Arts and the Creation of Mind* states that whatever the conceptions of visual art teaching are, how we think about teaching visual art is important. He believes that art cannot be taught and "To try to teach art is to risk stifling students' creativity, blocking their imagination, thwarting their personal expression" (p. 46). Visual art teacher educators need to act in ways that advance students' thinking. Eisner further suggested some general ideas about the teaching of art. Firstly, teachers cannot merely transmit knowledge or skills. The idea of transmitting knowledge and skills to some significant degree dominates the way art is taught in a higher education setting. This approach establishes a clear line of authority and the setting of short and long-term targets that reflects the visual art teacher educators' personal vision of teaching. It continues to provide the model for many visual art teacher educators. The salient practice that is often associated with this approach is the notion that the art product reflects the learning aptitude. This is reflected in Short's (1998) research findings: "in a studio curriculum, assessment of student learning is generally based upon the completed studio product" (p. 47).

The dichotomy of thinking concerning what makes good visual art teaching produces a gap between studio-based practitioners and the discipline-based practitioners in terms of methods and approaches, and, I suggest, personal understandings, beliefs, and values. What visual art teacher educators' believe and understand of good visual art teaching, and their understanding of their roles and responsibilities as a visual art teacher educator in developing good visual art teaching have been the key factors underlying this discrepancy. However, we can also claim that this discrepancy, which is marked by multiple curricular purposes and conflicting justifications, is the hallmark and strength of the arts. Indeed it is suggested by Efland (1995) that such diversity mandates an eclectic approach to an art curriculum. Siegesmund (1998) suggests, "Different rationales carry different assumptions about epistemology, curricula, and pedagogy. It is important for

us to be clear about the explicit and implicit choices that are spun from these assumptions" (p. 198). Therefore, it seems reasonable and appropriate that visual art teacher educators should be aware of their own assumptions about art education, and that they are able to clarify in their own minds what it is they are choosing to teach and why.

Secondly, Eisner believes the most important effects of visual art teaching happens outside the classroom, the ability to practice what students have learned in life outside school (pp. 49-50). In most cases educators are confronted with standardised tests with tasks that the students will seldom encounter outside school. For example, if a visual art teacher educator believes that learning how to operate a sophisticated kiln is important in the process of producing ceramics, then problems may arise in schools where the knowledge and skills that student teachers learned could not be put into practise due to budget constraint in buying expensive kilnss. The problem is more serious in the teaching of art theories when visual art teacher educators fail to understand the theory and how it relates to practice. This resonates with the 'Situated Learning' model proposed by Lave and Wenger (1991) who take on the work of Dewey, Bartlett, and Vygotsky where they suggest that all learning is contextual, embedded in a social and physical environment. In this model teachers are challenged to teach knowledge and skills in contexts that reflect the way the knowledge will be useful in real life. For example, situated learning can draw on situations from everyday life to explore the most theoretical endeavours. Eisner (2002) states, "One of the potential virtues of situated learning is that it increases the probability that students will be able to apply what they have learned" (p. 95).

Thirdly, the effect of learning does not happen until long after students leave schools and in ways students have never dreamed of. This idea is closely related to learning as being contextual, embedded in a social and physical environment. Eisner (2002) suggests,

> The way we assess most learning in school is by asking

> students to perform at a certain time. Yet what students have actually learned may not come to the surface until years after they have finished the course. During the various stages of the life cycle, lessons learned years ago may emerge that one was not aware of learning. Maturity can promote appreciations never before experienced. These appreciations can sometimes be discovered only by looking back. (p. 50)

In relation to this matter Tynjala (1999) states that an aim of professional preparation should be the development of an ability to reflect on and learn from practical experiences. Therefore deep learning approaches and the acquisition of knowledge and skills of reflexivity are deemed important to achieve quality learning outcomes. In reflecting on the effects of teaching, Eisner (2002) stresses that we should acknowledge that students learn because of the personal meanings they make of what they have been taught. According to Eisner (2002),

> Since meaning is located in the interaction between the student and the rest of the situation, and since each student brings a unique history to that situation, the meaning made by each student will differ from those of others, sometimes in very significant ways. (p. 51)

Lastly, teaching is related to the entry points the art teacher can use to comment upon students' work. These entry points provide a variety of locations at which to begin a conversation with the student. According to Eisner (2002),

> One thing is likely: the teacher will not want to try to say everything that can be said about the work in one encounter. What a teacher chooses to comment upon, and how those comments are made so that they are appropriate

> for particular students, no theoretical knowledge can prescribe. Knowledge of the situation of which the student is a central part must be considered, and often by the feel of what is likely to be productive. (p. 52)

Summary

It may be inferred that good teaching in teacher education shares similar qualities with good teaching in higher education in general. However, there is little empirical research into this phenomenon. Importantly, there is little research into the ways in which visual art teacher educators understand their practice and their perceptions of what constitutes good visual art teaching in higher education settings. To my knowledge no previous study has explored Malaysian visual art teacher educators' perceptions of what constitutes good visual art teaching. This study seeks to address this gap through investigating the following research questions:

What are visual art teacher educators' accounts of good visual art teaching practice in higher education?

What are visual art teacher educators' beliefs and values concerning good visual art teaching?

What life shaping factors inform visual art teacher educators' teaching practice?

Conclusion

This chapter has brought to light a detailed account of the literature related to good teaching in higher education, good teaching in teacher education, and good teaching in visual art teacher education. In higher education setting, notions of good teaching include deep learning approaches, student-centred approaches, collaborative learning, and reflective practice.

Knowledge transformation is seen as more desirable than a singular focus on knowledge transmission. In order for educators to enhance their teaching practice, collaborative learning and peer-reviewing are deemed as influential. Notions of good teaching in higher education also attribute greater value to the learner's experience and knowledge, hence their learning outcomes. Effective teaching is considered a part of good teaching that enables us to justify learning outcomes. The research-teaching nexus which is based on the idea that teaching in higher education can and should be a scholarly activity is seen as a contributing factor in the development of good teaching.

Good teaching in teacher education encounters similar issues to higher education. Some distinctive features of teacher education were discussed which include the concept of professionalism and professionalisation, lifelong learning, self-study, reflection and reflective practice, professional development, peer learning, cooperative learning, and collaborative learning. In order to understand good teaching in teacher education we need to understand visual art teacher educators' work, identities, knowledge, and how they learn to teach.

Good visual art teaching includes the ability to engage students' imagination and the technical requirements related to the use of materials. Visual art teacher educators need to know not only specific knowledge and skills but also pedagogical skills. Pedagogical skill requires visual art teacher educators to model the kind of language and skill students are expected to learn, and to demonstrate the process of art making. This means that specific knowledge and skills, and pedagogical skill are required to ensure good visual art teaching. One of the major aims of visual art teacher education programs is to expand the prospective teachers' understanding of the goals of the field and the way these goals might be achieved. In order to achieve this aim, programs and courses should be planned to introduce prospective teachers to ideas about curriculum, instruction and what constitutes artistic

learning, hoping through this process to enlighten and enable them to become effective in the classroom. It is believed that teacher education in art should be more than the training of art subject-specific skills and knowledge.

Based on the development of visual art education, visual art teaching is now seen as more than simply the production of artistic objects. There is a shift in the contemporary art world away from an emphasis on materials, techniques, and objects and towards a focus on concepts, problems, and ideas. The conceptions of visual art teaching evolves and changes. These conceptions have influenced visual art teaching in various ways which include the preparation of students for the industrial work place and development of creativity in the early 20th century, the discipline-based art education approach of the 1980s and 1990s, and the more recent interest in art as a way to enhance moral development or improve aesthetic decisions in everyday living, to integrate the personality, and to teach aesthetics in combination with the other arts. In many cases, the goals for art education have been instrumental in character. These goals of art education reflect much of our current thinking about the content and outcomes of art education. In the following chapter I shall present a detailed account of the methodology employed in this study of four visual art teacher educators' perceptions of what constitutes good visual art teaching in higher education.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

Introduction

This study explores the perceptions of four visual art teacher educators in a higher education setting in Malaysia of what constitutes good visual art teaching. The aim of this study is to elicit participants' beliefs, values, and accounts of practice concerning visual art teaching practices in a higher education setting. This study endeavours to capture the meanings and understandings that these visual art teacher educators use as a basis for their actions in specific settings. As such, this research allows us to gain a better understanding of the participants and their beliefs through the accounts they provide.

In this study, four visual art teacher educators who have different areas of specialisation in visual art education were interviewed and observed. In addition, 12 student teachers consisting of six pre-service and six in-service final year student teachers from the same department were interviewed. The inclusion of student teachers' perceptions reflects an attempt to secure a better understanding of the phenomenon in question.

The study was conducted in a particular higher education setting—the University of Education Malaysia (UoEM). The university has a long history dating back to 1922 when it was a teacher training college. This institution, Malaysia's oldest teacher training college was then upgraded to a teacher training institute in 1987 in recognition of its contribution towards teaching excellence before being upgraded again to a university in 1997. The university currently consists of approximately 15,000 students, a population composed of

various races: Malay, Chinese, Indian, and Bumiputera.[10] All of the students trained to be either primary or secondary school teachers.

This study adopts a qualitative case study approach and draws on the principles and practices of narrative inquiry. Each case is reported as a narrative account of the primary participant's beliefs, values, and practices. The study draws on detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple methods and sources of information consisting of individual interviews, small-group interviews, and observations.

This study falls within the constructivist paradigm as it recognises participants as collaborators in the research process and presents findings from the point of view of both the researcher and the participants in order to construct meaning (Creswell, 2003). The adoption of a constructivist approach recognises the establishment of a respectful and interactive researcher-respondent relationship (Manning, 1997).

To obtain a better understanding of what constitutes good visual art teaching in a higher education setting, it is necessary to address a number of research questions:

What are visual art teacher educators' accounts of good visual art teaching practice in higher education?

What are visual art teacher educators' beliefs and values concerning good visual art teaching?

What life shaping factors inform visual art teacher educators' teaching practice?

In this chapter, I shall describe the theoretical principles supporting the

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[10] Bumiputra or Bumiputera (Malay, from Sanskrit Bhumiputra; translated literally, it means "son of the soil"), is an official definition widely used in Malaysia, embracing ethnic Malays as well as other indigenous ethnic groups such as the Orang Asli in Peninsular Malaysia and the tribal peoples in Sabah and Sarawak.

methodology employed in this study, and the ontological and epistemological basis of the research. I shall outline the key features of a constructivist approach and describe the ways in which this approach informed the case study. I shall also describe the methods and techniques employed, analysis processes, and reporting procedures.

In the following section, I will provide an overview of the ontological stance adopted for this study, and its implications for the epistemology and reflexive character of a research process grounded in these perspectives.

Constructivist Ontology

Constructivism holds that knowledge and realities are experientially and socially constructed. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), the constructivist paradigm "assumes a relativist ontology" (p. 21) in which there are multiple realities. Hatch (2002) states that "constructivist ontology assumes a world in which universal, absolute realities are unknowable, and the objects of inquiry are individual perspectives or constructions of reality" (p. 15). In addition, Hatch (2002) claims that, "While acknowledging that elements are often shared across social groups, constructivist science argues that multiple realities exist that are inherently unique because they are constructed by individuals who experience the world from their own vantage points" (p. 15). It is generally agreed that constructivism is primarily an ontology asserting that reality is social rather than material (Creswell, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000b; Hatch, 2002). As all individuals and participants bring different experiences and backgrounds to their interpretations of being and reality, the nature of being and reality is also different for each individual.

Constructivist Epistemology

Epistemology "is linked intimately to worldview" (Ladson-Billings, 2000, p. 258). In constructivist epistemology, this worldview is symbolically constructed and subjective. The understandings of the world are based on

conventions, and "truth" is "what we agree it is" (Hatch, 1985, p.161 cited in Hatch 2002, p. 15). A constructivist epistemology in a research process seeks to study the nature of knowledge (the epistemology) from the point of view of the participants. Through constructivist epistemology, we seek to understand the "relationship between the inquirer and the known" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 26). Participants then, co-construct their understandings as the "knower and known interact and shape one another" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 21).

Hatch (2002) states that in constructivist approaches, the researcher and the participants are interactively linked in the process of co-construction through mutual engagement (p. 15). From this perspective, it is desirable for researchers and participants to work closely together. According to Mishler (1986), it is through mutual engagement that researchers and participants construct knowledge concerning the phenomenon that is under investigation (cited in Hatch, 2002, p. 15). Therefore, based on this approach known as constructivist epistemology, my participants and I are able to interpret and co-construct understandings about what constitutes good visual art teaching.

Case Study

Stake (2000) suggests that "case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of what is to be studied" (p. 435) and "by whatever methods, we choose to study the case" (p. 435). Stake (2000) identifies three types of case study which he describes as 'intrinsic case study', 'instrumental case study' and 'collective case study' (p. 437). An intrinsic case study is a study of a particular case because "the researcher wants a better understanding of this particular case" (Stake, 2000, p. 437). The study is undertaken not because the case represents other cases, illustrates a particular trait or problem, but because the case itself is of interest due to its particularity and extra-ordinariness.

An instrumental case study according to Stake (2000) is a study of a particular case that provides an insight into an issue. The case is "looked at in depth, its

context scrutinized, its ordinary activities detailed" (Stake, 2000, p. 437) but the aim is to facilitate our understanding of something else. The case is of secondary interest and it may be seen as typical or not of other cases.

The case study in this research is the four visual art teacher educators. Each visual art teacher educator as an individual is intrinsically interesting. Each one of them forms part of a 'collective' case study. However, we are interested in the 'instrumental' potential of each case in providing insight into the phenomenon. We are studying these visual art teacher educators as they have been identified as the most suitable people that can provide a good understanding of what good visual art teaching looks like in a higher education setting in Malaysia. Therefore this study rests in the intersection between 'intrinsic' and 'instrumental' case studies while not neglecting that this case study is also a 'collective' case study. The findings of this case study relate primarily to the visual art teacher educators of the specific higher education setting and although not generalisable may be transferable to other higher education settings that share similar features and cultural contexts.

One advantage of the case study approach is that through the use of multiple data generation methods and sources, a large amount of description and detail may be obtained. Researchers can learn a lot from one case as this volume of detail may raise many future research questions to follow up in other studies.

One of the main disadvantages associated with the use of the case study methods is related to the size of the sample in case study research. Case studies tend to focus on a small number of participants in order to generate rich data. Therefore the results of the study are not generalisable. In other words, the experiences of one person might not apply to broad populations. With case studies, we learn a lot about one case, but what we learn might not apply to the larger population. Yin (1994) has suggested that single or multiple case studies have been perceived as less desirable methods of inquiry when compared to those that provide increased opportunities for generalisation to a wider population such as survey based research. However, the aim of this study is to particularise, not generalise. Furthermore, the focus on in-depth investigation

of a small sample provides opportunity for different insights than those provided by a larger sample size and survey methods. The findings of this study may be transferable as readers recognise resonances with these visual art teacher educators' experiences and their own. These issues shall be pursued further in a discussion related to trustworthiness.

Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquiry has gained prominence in educational research over the past two decades and considerable attention has been paid to developing a deeper understanding of this research method. Narrative inquiry according to Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2004a) is generally used to refer to the idea that the narratives produced through systematic reflections by prospective and experienced teachers and/or by visual art teacher educators contain knowledge within them. To them narratives are "the vehicles through which much of practitioners' knowledge is made explicit and articulated by the knower and also conveyed to others outside the immediate context of the knower" (p. 607). While to Hatch (2002), narrative inquiry is based on the notion that "humans make sense of their lives through story" (p. 28), the emphasis is on the "meanings individuals generate through stories, and [how] constructivist researchers and their participants co-construct the stories that are told as part of the research" (p. 28).

Narrative inquiry has been strongly influenced by the work of Jerome Bruner (1986) who identifies two forms of meaning making which he termed 'paradigmatic knowing' and 'narrative knowing'. Each provides distinct ways of ordering experience, of constructing reality and has its own particular function. Paradigmatic knowing seeks to establish universal truth conditions; it is concerned with abstract and general theories and with empirical verification. Narrative knowing is characterised by good stories that gain credence through their life-likeness; it is concerned with the particulars of experience, and chronicles events over time. Narrative inquiry examines the way a story is told by considering the positioning of the actor/storyteller, the endpoints, the

supporting cast, the sequencing and the tension created by the revelation of some events, in preference to others (Riley & Hawe, 2005, p. 226).

Bruner writes extensively about the role of narrative as a way of knowing (Bruner, 1986; Bruner, 2002; Bruner, 2003). Developing the argument that "stories ... provide models of the world ... principally as metaphor" (Bruner, 2002, p. 25), Bruner (2002) proposes that:

> stories are ... operating in two realms, one a landscape of action in the world, the other a landscape of consciousness where the protagonist's thoughts and feelings and secrets play themselves out ... It is part of the magic of well-wrought stories that they keep these two landscapes intertwined, making the knower and the known inseparable. (pp. 25–26)

Following Bruner, White (2005) suggests that these two landscapes—of 'people's stories of life and of personal identity combine to compose "landscapes of the mind"' (p. 10). Psychologist Donald Polkinghorne (1995) applied Bruner's cognitive concepts in the social research context. He suggests that the term 'narrative' can refer to "the process of making a story, to the cognitive scheme of the story, or to the result of the process - also called 'stories', 'tales' or 'histories'" (p. 13). For Polkinghorne (1988) there are two types of narrative inquiry—*descriptive* and *explanatory*. In descriptive narrative, the purpose is "to produce an accurate description of the interpretive narrative accounts individuals or groups use to make sequences of events in their lives or organisations meaningful" (p. 161-162). In explanatory narrative, the interest is to account for the connection between events in a causal sense and to provide the necessary narrative accounts that supply the connections.

Educational researchers Clandinin and Connelly (2000) attempt to establish purposes, describe processes, and provide a convincing rationale for narrative modes of knowing, interpreting, and researching. They define the phenomenon of narrative inquiry as "story" and the inquiry process as the "narrative". They believe that experience is understood narratively, so educational experience

should be studied narratively. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) emphasise the dynamic and dialogical nature of narrative research by stating that:

> narrative inquiry is a way of understanding experience. It is collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places and in social interaction with milieus. An inquirer enters this matrix in the midst of living and telling, reliving and retelling, the stories of experiences that make up people's lives, both individual and social. Simply stated, narrative inquiry is stories lived and told. (p. 20)

Narrative inquiry enables a person to re-create past events in order to discern the meanings, values, and patterns of that life through reflection. The approach promotes the development of voice and self through critical reflection on one's life experiences and the circumstances of one's life. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) propose narrative and story telling as a mode of inquiry, one which places the researcher as centrally involved in the study of experience. They suggest that experience is both temporal and storied and argue that when individuals note something of their experience, either to themselves or others, they do so in story form. Clandinin and Connelly conceptualise narrative inquiry as a way to uncover and represent teachers' personal practical knowledge. Clandinin and Connelly (2004) use narrative inquiry to understand experience using a multi-dimensional exploration in what they term as 'temporality' (past, present, and future), 'interaction' (personal and social) and 'location' (place) (p. 576).

The adoption of narrative inquiry in this study corresponds with the constructivist approach. The use of narrative within a qualitative research context involves the co-construction of meaning through data generation, data analysis, and data presentation of the events, human actions and experiential accounts (Goodfellow, 1998).

One of the purposes of narrative inquiry approaches is to elicit

participants' stories in order to co-construct an account of how they understand and participant in the world in relation to the phenomenon under question. As such narrative inquirers do "accept" the story they are given, and then work with the participant in a process of co-construction to create a more complex account of the phenomenon. The views professed by the teacher educators are what these participants present – the thesis does not purport to provide a definitive account of 'good' visual art teaching. Rather, it seeks to uncover the ways in which these art teacher educators understand this concept, and the shaping forces behind these understandings.

Narrative has been used in this study as a means to elicit data, to analyse data and, to present data through narrative accounts of participants' experiences of the phenomenon. In this study, narrative is essentially more than the telling of stories. It is the way we create and recreate our realities and ourselves. We give meaning to stories which in turn inform our self-concept. The use of narrative inquiry is to provide a 'richer' view of life in familiar contexts: "it can make the familiar strange, and the strange familiar" (Clough, 2002, p. 5). Eisner (1997) adds to this, suggesting that "narrative when well crafted, is a spin to imagination, and through our imaginative participation in the worlds that we create we have a platform for seeing what we might call our "actual worlds" more clearly" (p. 261). The narratives that are the central focus of my study come from visual art teacher educators who attempt to convey the most important experiences of their own lives and how those experiences inform their beliefs and values of good visual art teaching practice, through the co-construction of these experiences with me.

In specific contexts, teachers are said to be constructing their identities based on their personal ways of knowing themselves as teachers. This is in accordance to Ryan and Campbell's (2001) statement cited in Stronach, et al. (2002) that if professional lives are to be understood in their complexity, plurality and inconsistency, then one requirement may be that of a 'narrative adequacy', the possibility of a 'good story' (p. 633). This possibility of good

story according to Tom Anderson (1997) is the traditional role of the arts, one of "Promoting a world view, or narrative, as it engenders beliefs, values..." (p. 71). Further, Giddens (1991) argues that interpretive self-history is at the core of self-identity in modern social life (cited in Peel, 2005, p. 491). Moreover, in opening up some 'action spaces' (Scott & Usher, 1999, p. 212) it upgrades the voice of 'ordinary experience' (p. 213). Importantly, then, it is a certain ordinariness that can be illuminating by "making the familiar strange" (Delamont & Atkinson, 1995, p. v). Personal experience therefore has the potential to revise collective practice, ideas and life worlds, and to provide professional voice (Kostogriz & Peeler, 2004).

Knowing visual art teacher educators' life histories helps us understand their involvement in their teaching and their students' work (Feiman-Nemser, 1986, cited in Smith, 2001, p. 123) and understand how life experiences affect what they believe and how they teach (Clark, 1992 cited in Smith, 2001, p. 123). Smith (2001) believes that dismissing teachers' [visual art teacher educators] life histories means that we may not be able to understand better their perceptions. Understanding their life histories enables us to understand a visual art teacher educator's life and work in terms of the meaning attached to it. Learning about visual art teacher educators' lives can provide us with insight into their beliefs, values, and practices, as well as their relationships with each other and with their students (Smith, 2001, p. 112).

Research Framework

This research was undertaken in four phases. The first phase dealt with obtaining ethical consent from the Human Research Ethics Committee, University of Tasmania. This was followed by an application to conduct research in Malaysia. In the interim, pilot interviews were conducted and the interview questions revised.

In the second phase, I distributed information sheets and consent forms to the

participants. All components were outlined and agreed to. I conducted two successive interviews with each of my visual art teacher educator participants at different times within a three week time-frame. Between the first and second interviews with visual art teacher educators, data were transcribed and member-checking was conducted to confirm the accuracy of accounts provided in the first interview.

In the third phase, I conducted classroom/studio observations of each visual art teacher educator. I also conducted two small group interviews with student teachers. Each group consisted of six in-service student teachers and six pre-service student teachers. This was followed by individual interviews with six student teachers, three in-service and three pre-service. In this phase, I also conducted a third interview with the visual art teacher educators.

The final stage of my study involved the analysis of all data gathered during the fieldwork. I analysed these data by employing both analysis of narrative and narrative analysis (Polkinghorne, 1995) techniques, leading to the development of four narrative accounts of my visual art teacher educator participants. During this phase these accounts were checked with the participants to elicit their comments and enable them to participate further in the co-construction of their accounts.

Methods and Techniques

In this section a detailed account of the methods and techniques utilised in the generation of the study's data will be provided. In particular, the use of interviews, observations, and small group interviews in the study and the advantages and disadvantages of the methods and techniques being used will be discussed.

Interviews

Interviews are an established and long-standing method of gathering data in the

social sciences (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002; Kvale, 1996; Seidman, 1998). Research interviews have been defined in a number of ways with the variation in definitions usually associated with the degree of structure that is applied to the interview process. Fontana and Frey (2000) claim that interview is "one of the most common and powerful ways in which we try to understand our fellow human beings" (p. 645) and involves "individual, face-to face verbal interchange" and/or "face-to-face group interchange" (p. 645).

In this study, the research interviews are viewed in a similar light to that of Kvale (1996) who states that the "research interview is based on the conversation of daily life and is a professional conversation" (p. 5). Interviews conducted as part of this study were not seen as a set of questions and answers, but part of a larger, recursive narrative about the visual art teacher educators' experiences and views. Kvale (1996) draws on the metaphor of a *miner* and a *traveller* to characterise the differing nature of the interviewer. The miner treats knowledge as "buried metal and the interviewer is the miner who unearths the valuable metal" (p. 3) and understands knowledge as 'buried metal' waiting to be uncovered. The miner assumes that the process of uncovering the knowledge will remain stable and constant in its discovery. The traveller, on the other hand, commences a journey and accepts that in travelling alongside the object of research they will alter it and be altered by it. In this study my 'journey' was accompanied by four visual art teacher educators and 12 student teachers as co-travellers. The relationships that were established during the journey are important. The way in which the traveller acts, questions and responds to others shapes the journey and ultimately the way in which they will retell their experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The metaphor of the traveller also recognises the role of the researcher as a participant in constructing understanding as opposed to a *miner* who tends to view "knowledge as given" (Kvale, 1996). This clearly has implications for the research perspective adopted for the study, as it is one that is constructivist in its orientation.

Interviews enable stories to emerge from the constant interplay and

conversational turn taking of speaker and listener, and therefore provide a detailed understanding of the life and everyday experiences of the visual art teacher educators and how these experiences influenced their understandings, beliefs, and practices. In his book, *Interviewing as Qualitative Research*, Irving Seidman (1998) states that he conducts interviews because he is interested in other people's stories. To Seidman, "stories are a way of knowing." (p. 1). Based on that premise, the purpose of interviewing is "an interest in understanding the experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience" (p. 3). Interviews may be highly structured, semi-structured, or unstructured. In structured interviews, "the interviewer asks all respondents the same series of pre-established questions with a limited set of response categories. There is generally little room for variation in responses except where open-ended questions (which are infrequent) may be used" (Janesick, 2000, p. 649). The unstructured interview is the opposite of the structured interview, with very open-ended questions and a focus on probing issues (*Ibid.* p. 652), while semi-structured interviews lie in the continuum between structured and unstructured interviews. The choice of interview type depends on the interview purposes. In this study, I used semi-structured interviews.

There are a number of advantages associated with the use of interviews in this study. These include the capability of interviews to generate a large amount of data in a relatively short period of time; the opportunity for participants to express their opinions relating to a range of issues that are not accessible through observations; and the opportunity for the researcher to ask questions relating to specific events or issues that may not come about in other situations (Walford, 2001). Each of these aspects is deemed important for the study.

The disadvantages of interviews are often associated with the participants' response, who when knowing that they are being interviewed for research that will be published, may withhold some data or distort accounts of events influencing the findings of the study. However this can be overcome by assuring the participants that they will be given an opportunity to member-check the interviews and will be able to add or omit any information. In

addition, interviewing multiple participants provides the opportunity to understand the phenomenon from a range of perspectives. And, interviewing participants multiple times provides opportunity to return to issues, to check understandings and to probe more deeply. Through this process greater rapport is established whereby the accuracy of information is enhanced. Another disadvantage pointed out by Coffey and Atkinson (1996) is that interviewing does not provide access to naturally occurring interaction as "they certainly do not give access to how people actually perform a wide variety of daily tasks" (p. 19). Nevertheless, a well structured interview can provide individuals with the opportunity to represent their personal experiences.

Three types of interview were used in this study: three-stage interview model (Seidman, 1998); one-off individual interviews; and, small group interviews. The three-stage interviews were conducted with four visual art teacher educators and one-off individual interviews were conducted with six student teachers. I also conducted a small group interview with the student teachers. The individual interviews and small group discussion groups served a twofold purpose: on one hand it encouraged reflection by inviting visual art teacher educators and student teachers to think about, analyse and question their practices and experiences and, on the other hand, it served as a source of data for their decision making processes, providing information about visual art teacher educators' beliefs and teaching practices as well as students' beliefs and understandings of good visual art teaching in higher education.

Individual Visual art teacher educator Interview Sequence

The individual visual art teacher educator interview sequence was based upon the three-stage interview model put forward by Seidman (1998). The focus of the first interview in Seidman's model is "to put the participants' experiences in context by asking him or her to tell as much as possible about themselves in light of the topic up to the present time" (Seidman, 1998, p. 11). Accordingly the first interview probed the visual art teacher educators' history, with questions that asked them to reconstruct their early experiences of art in their

family, in schools, with friends, in their neighbourhood and at work (See Appendix G for the first interview schedule). The first interview was conducted a week after agreement to participate in the study by the visual art teacher educators.

The second interview concentrated on the "concrete details" (Seidman, 1998, p. 12) of the visual art teacher educators' descriptions of current practice and their perceptions of what constitutes good visual art teaching in a higher education setting (See Appendix H for the second interview schedule). The interview was conducted prior to classroom observations of the visual art teacher educators' teaching to provide an opportunity for the visual art teacher educators "to re-construct the details of their experience within the context in which it occurs" (Seidman, 1998, p. 11). In order to place their experience within the context of a social setting, I asked the visual art teacher educator participants to talk about their relationships with their students, colleagues, superiors, administrators, and the wider community. The first and second interviews helped to inform the classroom observations.

The third interview was a follow-up discussion which aimed to clarify queries raised by observation data and analysis undertaken of prior interview data. It was intended to encourage participants to reflect further on their beliefs, values and practices; specifically on their perceptions of good visual art teaching. These three stages of the interview process are to be adhered to, as each of the interviews serves a distinct purpose and as Seidman (1998) writes, "each interview provides a foundation of detail that helps illuminate the next" (p. 13) (See Appendix J for the third interview schedule).

The development of the interview questions was influenced by the purposes of each interview in Seidman's (1998) model. In addition, the guiding questions were also based on the study's research questions and the literature. The interviews were generated in part from the ideas developed in Berliner's (1994) work on teacher expertise and *The Australian Scholarship of Teaching Project.* I utilised these ideas in the design of initial interview schedules which focused

on good visual art teaching. The interviews were based on a set of open-ended questions related to the issue of what constitutes good visual art teaching in a higher education setting and the visual art teacher educators' experience of this. Participants were given the opportunity to talk about themselves and their learning experiences and how these related to the phenomenon. I scheduled an hour interview for all the interviews. I posed questions that would elicit rich, detailed narratives from my interviewees which covered their backgrounds and life histories and their perceptions of good visual art teaching in higher education and what factors influence their perceptions.

Student Teachers' Small Group Interview

The group interview according to Fontana and Frey (2000) is "a qualitative data gathering technique that relies upon the systematic questioning of several individuals simultaneously in a formal or informal setting" (p. 651). The small group interview in this study sought the perspectives of other key participants, the student teachers (See Appendix K for the small group interview schedule). The purpose of this small group interview was to consider the phenomenon of what constitutes good visual art teaching from different perspectives and to enrich the data obtained from key informants. The open response format of a small group provides an opportunity to obtain large and rich amounts of data in the participants' own words. The small group interview allows participants to react to and build upon the responses of other group members. This synergistic effect of the group setting may result in the production of data or ideas that might not have been uncovered in individual interviews. Therefore small group interview responses have high face validity due to the clarity of the context and detail of the discussion.

Although small group interview is a valuable research tool and offers a number of advantages, it holds some disadvantages. Many of these disadvantages are simply the negative sides of the advantages listed above. One of the disadvantages of the small group interview is the number of participants limit significant generalisation to a larger population. Another disadvantage of the

small group interview is that particular individuals may dominate discussion and some individuals may be intimidated in the group. In this case, the interviewer plays an important role in encouraging all group members to participate by asking questions relevant to the discussions and facilitating the conversation.

Some may argue that small group interviews may actually foster discussion around 'sensitive' issues and that group settings can increase the likelihood of people sharing personal experiences. This is because an awareness of shared experiences between group members may encourage discussion of difficult and sensitive issues. This occurred in this study, when a student teacher shed tears while reminiscing about a negative learning experience with one lecturer who kept on rejecting her studio project without any specific reasons or concrete suggestions. The ability of the small group interview to draw out this kind of data was one reason this method was chosen for this study.

Student Teacher's Individual Interview

In this study, individual student teacher interviews were conducted. This interview was meant to probe more deeply into issues discussed in the small group interviews (See Appendix L for the student teacher's individual interview schedule). It served as a platform for student teachers to add or to alter those views expressed during the small-group interview. The aim of this interview was to provide an opportunity for individual student teacher participants to share issues they felt unable to share during the group interview and to expand on the issues raised during the group interview.

Observation

In this study, observation was used as a secondary source of data and also served to provide methodological triangulation. Through the use of observation I was able to record the data directly from my observations of research participants (Rolfe, 2001) and relate my observations to the interviews

conducted both before and after the observations. Through observation it was possible to compare the participants' actions with their verbal responses. However, it was important during this process to note two things. First, both 'accounts' (what people perceived what they do and what they actually do) were based on the participants' point of view. Secondly, in my view, observational data, rather more than interview data, are subject to interpretation by the researcher. I say this because observers have a great degree of freedom and autonomy regarding what they choose to observe, and how they filter and analyse that information.

On the other hand, I have no way of knowing if a one-off observation is capturing the class as it is normally conducted and if things changed because of my presence. My gauge as to whether the visual art teacher educators changed their practices was through the student response and my data does not suggest that the students were surprised in any way by the conduct and delivery of the sessions I observed.

Implementation

Pilot of Methods and Techniques

A pilot was conducted to find out if the interview schedules were well constructed. It was also carried out to practice and develop my skills and techniques in conducting interviews. The pilot phase was beneficial in the sense that it enabled me to make adjustments to the content, phrasing and order of the interview questions. The interview questions were piloted with two senior academicians, one of whom was a visual art educator in the School of Education at the University of Tasmania to consider the nature of the data that each of the questions would produce. In addition, the level of difficulty in answering each of the questions and the way in which the visual art teacher educators interpreted them were also examined. Through this process I was able to make a number of changes to the wording of the questions in order to

make them easier to answer and also to sharpen their focus. I also omitted some questions to prevent the interview from being too long by reducing the number of questions that appeared to address similar issues.

I pre-tested the format, style, and content of my questions with two visual art teacher educators in Malaysia in the Malay language. This pre-test enabled me to evaluate my questions and interviewing techniques in Malay. As a result of the pre-test, I modified my approach, the questions, and interview style to best elicit information from each participant. For example, I used language (including jargon and acronyms) that was familiar and comfortable for visual art teacher educators such as 'P&P' (Teaching and learning), and 'BBM' (Teaching Aids). The provision of an outline of discussion points was considered necessary as this pilot stage of the interview process demonstrated that it was difficult for the visual art teacher educators to know where to begin without being provided with some guidance.

Pilot observations were conducted on two visual art teacher educators in Malaysia, working in a studio-based and non-studio class respectively. The observations were conducted to practice the skills of observations and field-note taking.

The student teacher's interview schedules were piloted together with two senior academicians—a visual art educator and a senior researcher in the School of Education at the University of Tasmania to determine the nature of the data that each of the questions would produce.

Visual art teacher educators Individual Interviews

First Interview

The first interview was arranged with visual art teacher educators and held predominantly in their offices at a mutually convenient time. Each interview although scheduled for an hour lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. Discussions

were audio-taped, with full transcripts developed for each visual art teacher educator.

On presenting myself, I decided to dress appropriately to the situation—dressing as a colleague. It was important for me to empathise with my participants as much as possible and to promote an environment in which they would feel comfortable sharing with me. I wanted to be seen as an interested listener: empathetic, trustworthy, polite, non-judgmental, and professional.

The first interview began with simple close-ended questions which were followed by open-ended questions. The close-ended questions were about the visual art teacher educator's background such as place of birth, date of birth, schools attended, and academic qualifications. The open-ended questions sought information concerning the participants' decision to become a visual art teacher educator; their most powerful learning experience (negative/positive) in higher education; how those experiences shaped their studio/classroom teaching practices; what factors contributed to their understandings of visual art teaching; what constitutes good visual art teaching; how they describe their teaching and their students' learning outcomes; a description of an episode of good visual art teaching in a higher education setting; and, what they considered to be the best approach to teaching art.

I continuously reviewed my style and interview techniques to obtain the most detailed responses possible. My prior knowledge of participants as colleagues and my conversational style and ability to customise my interview techniques and tailor questions for each participant allowed me to strengthen rapport and create a non-threatening atmosphere that improved the focus of my inquiry. In this first interview, all of the interviews lasted approximately 90 minutes, which allowed time for an in-depth exploration of my participants' background, history, understandings, values, and accounts of good visual art teaching. At the end of the interviews, we discussed the second interview schedule.

Second Interview

As in the first interviews, the second interviews were also held predominantly in the visual art teacher educator's offices, scheduled at a convenient time agreed upon by each participant. Discussions were again audio-taped with permission from the interviewees.

This second interview was composed of open-ended questions such as, "In our previous interview, we have discussed your history, beliefs, and values pertaining to your visual art teaching. Is there anything that you wish to add or change?" followed by questions such as "In the previous interview, you have told me about the events that led you to work as a visual art teacher educator and what your work is like for you, I would now like you to tell me what it means for you to be a visual art teacher educator" and "Can you take me through a day in your life as a visual art teacher educator?" Based on the interviews, I constructed a framework for my observation.

Third Interview

The third visual art teacher educators' interviews were conducted after the studio/class observation. This third interview was a follow-up discussion which aimed to clarify queries raised by the observation data and analysis of the previous interviews. It was meant to encourage participants to reflect further on their beliefs, values and practices. During the third interview the visual art teacher educators were encouraged to reflect on the meaning of their teaching practices and how it was related to their experiences, specifically the "intellectual and emotional connections between the participant's work and lives" (Seidman, 1998, p. 12). This reflection was intended to enhance the participants' understandings and practices. All of these interviews lasted approximately 60 minutes.

Small Group Interviews

The small group interviews employed in this study were conducted with two groups: six pre-service and six in-service student teachers at different times. The interviews (See Appendix H for student teachers' interview schedule) were based on a set of open-ended questions related to the issue of what constitutes good visual art teaching in a higher education setting. Participants were given the opportunity to talk about themselves and their learning experiences of visual art teaching in a higher education setting. They were informed that the discussion should focus mainly on the teaching of their visual art teacher educators.

In these small group interviews, I acted as the interviewer and moderator. Cultural sensitivity was highly regarded since the participants were not homogenous. Since the group was composed of participants with a different religion, race, and gender I ensured the questions avoided confrontation and discussion of these issues. As an interviewer, I posed questions to my participants; and as a moderator, I facilitated the discussion to ensure no one dominated the discussion. The participants were encouraged to respond to the questions freely and were advised not to be afraid to share their thoughts.

During the interviews the student teachers were encouraged to reflect on their experiences of learning art education in a higher education setting in Malaysia. This reflection was intended to gain a better picture of their perceptions of what constitutes good visual art teaching in that particular setting. Both of the group interviews lasted approximately 90 minutes.

Student Teacher's Individual Interview

Student teacher participants in this one-off interview were recruited from the small group interview participants. Three student teachers from the in-service group and three student teachers from the pre-service group volunteered to be interviewed individually at a date and time agreeable to both the interviewer and the interviewee. Participants were asked a set of questions (See Appendix J

for interview schedule) which were similar to the small-group interviews except that the interviews focused more on what had been discussed in the small-group. Therefore each individual was invited to expand upon these issues and provide personal responses. The interviews were conducted in a special room provided by the faculty and lasted approximately 90 minutes. Three participants came from the in-service group consisting of two females and one male: Sherry, Shah, and Naga[11] and three participants from the pre-service group consisting of three females: Fazil, Nick, and Neeza.

Observations

Observation captures the social setting in which people function, by recording the context in which they work. Observation is also an ongoing dynamic activity that is more likely than interviews to provide evidence of process—something that is continually moving and evolving. Conducting observations can be overwhelming during the initial period in the field due to the amount of activity to be observed and more importantly filtered, interpreted and recorded (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). To overcome this, I video-taped my observations from a fixed point tripod close to me so that I could monitor and record any instances that I deemed to be important. While the camera was doing its job, I was able to follow the other happenings in the classroom. I focused my attention on the teaching of my participants and recorded events that captured my attention.

The aim of the research guided the observations. During the observation, I became part of the class. I could sit wherever I liked. However, I did not choose any specific position. I would look for any spot in which I could video-tape the teaching process without blocking the students' views. Normally I

[11] Pseudonyms have been assigned to all participants. It should be noted that within Malaysia cultural expectations concerning anonymity can be viewed in contradictory ways. Whilst participants have indicated that they are happy to be identified I have observed the research conventions of providing anonymity for this study.

would sit in the middle of the classroom. I recorded events that were the focus of my study in my research diary. For example at the beginning of the class, I recorded what was being said and done. During the teaching session, I observed and noted the interaction between the visual art teacher educators and the student teachers, the classroom management methods, the methodological and pedagogical aspects of teaching, the teaching strategies and approaches, and the ways in which the classes were ended. I also reflected on what had been said in the interviews and what was being practised in class.

Access, Timing and Conduct of the Interviews

The field research took place in a higher education setting in Malaysia over a three month period beginning on 19 September 2005 and concluding on 23 December 2005. My rapport with all the visual art teacher educator participants was built on our collegiate experience as we all teach in the same department. This rapport made my interviews easier, however, when you know people whom you are interviewing or have some sort of relationship with them, there may be things that they are reluctant to tell or assume that I know and consequently do not mention. On the other hand, greater familiarity with the participants can provide greater understanding.

Six of the interviews were conducted in the visual art teacher educators' offices, four interviews were conducted in the art studio, and two interviews were conducted at my house by mutual agreement. These settings did not appear to affect the interchange. The length of time between each of the interviews was initially determined in light of the recommendations made by Seidman (1998) who suggested that interviews be spaced between three days and one week apart. This timing allows the participants and the researcher to reflect on the previous interview, and at the same time, to maintain the connection between the interviews. However, the rigours of field work and the busy schedules of some visual art teacher educators did not always allow this to happen. Consequently, the timing of the interviews was responsive to

individual needs. While every effort was made to ensure the research process progressed in a timely manner, ultimately it was the participants who determined the time frame for data collection within the study.

The provision of initial schedules allowed the visual art teacher educators to gauge approximately how long the interview would take, which ensured that they were able to "schedule the interviews around the other duties that they must undertake, and provide[d] enough time so that the participants felt... what they had to say is [was] being taken seriously" (Seidman, 1998, p. 14).

Recording the Interviews

The main criticism levelled against the use of audio recorders is their potential influence on the participants, that is, audio recording somehow alters the proceeding of events. In this research precautions were taken to ensure that the presence of the audio recorder did not dissuade the visual art teacher educators or make them feel uncomfortable. I also assured the visual art teacher educators that: the recording was not for public broadcast; they would be de-identified; and I would ensure that the information would be kept securely for five years and would then be destroyed.

Transcription of the Interview Data

In transcribing interview data, Woods (1986) argues that "without doubt, these are best transcribed by the researcher, however tedious a task it may seem" (p. 82). Transcribing the interviews myself helped me to become more familiar with my data. When I listened to the recordings, I was able to remember what the participants said and if parts of the recording were unclear, I repeatedly listened to the recording and in certain cases went back to the participants to seek clarification.

The transcription of the interview data was indeed a slow process because "as a simple rule of thumb, a one hour interview is ten hours of transcription and

almost as many hours of analysis" (Gillham, 2000, p. 65). When I transcribed, I remembered my supervisor's advise that "it is important to type everything that is said during the interviews" including my own questions and probes as the contextual entirety of the dialogue needed to be included. Even things that did not seem important were fully transcribed. It was important that I preserved the narratives of my participants as completely as possible. I could not predict at this stage of the process what data would be relevant and significant in the analysis phase.

Despite the process being slow and somewhat repetitive, Kvale (1996) argues that transcription is not "a simple clerical task ...transcription itself is an important interpretive process" (p. 16). For this reason it was important that I undertook the transcription so that I could extend control over such decisions.

I also transcribed each of the interviews because this represented one of the first stages through which the data were transformed. "Structuring the material into texts facilitates an overview and is in itself the beginning of analysis" (Kvale, 1996, p. 169). This process allowed me to become familiar with each of the visual art teacher educators' narrative accounts, and provided the opportunity to explore initial themes. The process of transcription, which was essentially altering the nature of language from spoken to written, required careful consideration. One of the difficulties associated with the transcription of interview data was that the nuances of spoken language were lost when the data were transformed from speech to text. The way in which words were spoken could convey as much meaning as the actual words that were uttered. In this sense "transcriptions are not copies or representations of some original reality, they are interpretive constructions" (Kvale, 1996, p. 165).

Once the interviews were transcribed, I conducted a member-checking process with the participants. In most of the transcriptions returned to me, individual speech patterns as well as incomplete thoughts, and sentences were removed by the participants.

Reflexivity

My role as a researcher was made easier due to my status as one of the visual art teacher educators in the faculty. I did not encounter any problems accessing the setting, understanding the language and culture of the respondents, deciding on how to present myself, locating informants, gaining trust, establishing rapport, and collecting empirical materials (Fontana & Frey, 2000, pp. 654-656). As all of my visual art teacher educator participants were my colleagues, and the student teacher participants were part of the higher education community, the important steps of gaining trust with them and being credible in their eyes had already taken place to a large extent.

As a researcher, I worked towards establishing rapport with all my participants and making my participants feel more at ease and therefore more willing to tell their stories. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) state that "The way an interviewer acts, questions and responds in an interview shapes the relationship and therefore the ways participants respond and give accounts of their experience" (p. 110). Rapport with my participants was already present and strong as we spoke the same language (Fontana & Frey, 2000, p. 655) and shared similar backgrounds and histories.

I also considered the nature of my relationships with my participants and other parties, such as the studio technicians and the students, during the observation in the classroom/studio, and small group interviews. In the observation, I chose not to participate and became a mere observer. This is in accordance with Adler and Adler's (1993) belief that one of the hallmarks of observation has been its non-interventionism, where "observers neither manipulate nor stimulate their subjects" (p. 80) although the potential influence of the observer undeniably exists (p. 80). Initially, this was something that I was conscious of because my presence and intentions in the classroom may have shaped events and interactions, albeit in a subtle way. My cultural background enabled me to know that by participating in the teaching process, I would be regarded as not respecting the host. This was an important consideration in my choice to

remain a passive observer. It should be noted that whilst my presence was acknowledged by my visual art teacher educator participants I was not invited to contribute to any of the classes.

The Participants

In this study, the sample was purposive as participants were deliberately selected by the Faculty based on the criteria that I have outlined. The participants consisted of four visual art teacher educators and 12 student teachers from the Art Department, UoEM. The Faculty nominated six visual art teacher educators consisting of three studio-based[12] teacher educators and three theory-based teacher educators for this study. Two participants withdrew due to other commitments. The two studio-based visual art teacher educators were Osman—Graphic Design, and Burn—Fine Metal; and two theory-based[13] visual art teacher educators were Johan—Art History and Criticism, and Hijas—Art Education Curriculum. It is important to note that in this Art Department, the majority of the visual art teacher educators are male and there are a few female visual art teacher educators. The total number of male visual art teacher to female is 77:33 respectively.

I knew all my visual art teacher educator participants as colleagues from the time I joined the university in 2002. Hijas and Johan were both highly experienced visual art teacher educators, with more than twenty years and twelve years teaching experience respectively. Both visual art teacher educators had also taught across a range of school disciplines. In addition to their teaching experiences, both teachers had held consultancy/advisory positions with the Ministry of Education. Hijas has had more experience than

[12] Studio-based refers to teaching of art in a studio setting and generally adopting fine art approaches to teaching of art. Examples of studio-based courses are Fine Metal, Graphic Design, Painting, and Sculpture.

[13] Theory-based refers to teaching of art based on theoretical aspects such as art history, art criticism, and art education curriculum.

the other participants. He held the position of Art Education adviser in various arts related bodies in addition to the post of Dean which he has held since the University's upgrading from a teacher's training college in 1987. Johan has had teaching experiences at various levels. Essentially, given the breadth and diversity of their professional histories, both teachers can be viewed as experienced and knowledgeable practitioners who are well informed in the visual art education area.

Compared to their counterparts, Osman and Burn have had limited teaching experience. However they have vast professional experience in their own fields. Osman is an eminent graphic designer and Burn a fine metal artist. Osman whilst considerably new to the world of education has held administrative posts prior to his four years of teaching experience at UiTM. He also taught at the TV3 Academy before he was offered a lecturing position at the university. Burn held positions of responsibility including Head of Department (Art) for a period of three years. He has had the least teaching experience of all my participants. Prior to his teaching at UoEM, Burn had spent two years teaching at UiTM.

The decision to work with both the pre and in-service student teachers was prompted by my desire to work with a group that represented different types of knowledge, age levels, and varying years of experience. A gender balance was also sought in terms of the composition of the participants. I hoped for a balance of males and females among the 943 student teachers (265 males and 678 females) but in the end was not able to achieve this. The breakdown was two males and ten female student teachers. All the pre-service student teachers were aged 23 while the in-service student teachers' ages ranged between 25 and 35.

Ethical Issues, Gaining and Maintaining Access

The required proposal forms were completed and submitted to the Human

Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network, University of Tasmania for approval. Subsequent to receipt of the required approval (Appendix A), a letter was sent to the Economic Planning Unit Research Committee (EPU), Prime Minister Department of Malaysia to obtain permission to undertake research in Malaysia. Upon obtaining the approvals (Appendix B-Approval from EPU), a letter was sent to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, to gain access to the participants.

Since the recruitment of my participants was made through third party recruitment, I provided the Dean with a written and verbal overview of the study and the desirable characteristics of my prospective participants. In the letter, and my subsequent phone conversation with the Dean, we discussed the nature of my study and what the requirements would be.

Following my conversation with him, I contacted the Head of Department through email and later by phone. The Head of Department indicated that he would be able to recruit the visual art teacher educator participants and would possibly delegate the recruitment of student teacher participants to one of the tutors, as this tutor had worked closely with most of the final year students.

I requested to the Head of Department that all my potential visual art teacher educator participants be provided with a copy of the information sheet (Appendix C), and consent forms (Appendix D). Copies of the approvals from the University of Tasmania and the Economic Planning Unit were also enclosed with the letter to the Head of Department and a copy to the Dean together with the timeline.

After receiving all the visual art teacher educator participants' consent forms, I contacted all the visual art teacher educators who agreed to become my research participants, expressed appreciation of their willingness to participate in my study and informed them of the nature of my research in as broad a context as possible. I then set up an appointment for the first interview.

A week before the small-group interviews, I contacted the leader of the student

group (appointed by the Head of Department) by phone and set an appointment with her. I provided her with a copy of the information sheet (Appendix E), and consent forms (Appendix F). I did not face any problems as the leader seemed to be well informed about my study and was well organised. She had already recruited all the other participants. We discussed the nature of my study and the ethical issues. Prior to our discussions, I had already discussed with the Head of Department a suitable place for the small group interviews. He recommended I use the Research Higher Degree room and I obtained the help of the faculty's technician to prepare the room. This setting was selected because it was familiar (or at least known) to most participants and it was hoped that its surroundings would engender a feeling of comfort.

Trustworthiness

The aim of trustworthiness in qualitative research is to support the argument that the findings are "worth paying attention to" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290). Ensuring trustworthiness is crucial. How to ensure the quality and trustworthiness of qualitative research has been of concern since the emergence of approaches to research that do not adhere to scientific positivist traditions. In any qualitative research project, four issues of trustworthiness demand attention: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Denzin and Lincoln (2000b) state that these four issues of trustworthiness "replace the usual positivist criteria of internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity" (p. 21). All of these terms are examined in the next section in order to determine the trustworthiness of the study. In this study, trustworthiness of the data was strengthened by use of multiple sources of data (visual art teacher educators and student teachers) which enabled triangulation through corroborating evidence (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000a; Stake, 2000)(Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Stake, 1999).

Credibility

Credibility in qualitative studies is closely related to the quality and 'believability' of a study. Credibility depends less on sample size than on the richness of the information gathered and on the analytical abilities of the researcher (Patton, 1990). Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue, for qualitative work, credibility consists of ensuring that "the data speak to the findings" (p. 30). In order for the data to speak, the researcher has to provide enough 'rich, thick description' such as the setting, program, participants, procedures, and interactions, so that the boundaries and parameters of that study are well specified.

Credibility, in this study presents "such faithful descriptions or interpretations of a human experience that the people having that experience would immediately recognize it" (Guba & Lincoln, 1985, p. 30). It is present when others can recognise the experience by reading about it. Stake (1978) states that credibility of qualitative research, typically rich with detail and insights into participants' experiences of the world, "may be epistemologically in harmony with the reader's experience" (p. 5) and thus more meaningful.

In this study, credibility was enhanced through the use of multiple types and sources of data and careful recording of interviews and observations. Transcription of interviews were developed from the audio and video recording and supported by the researcher's diary.

Transferability

In the naturalistic paradigm, *transferability* refers to what Stake (1978) calls "naturalistic generalization" (p. 6) and what Eisner (1991) claims as a form of "retrospective generalization" (p. 205) that can allow us to understand our past (and future) experiences in a new way. The researcher cannot specify the transferability of findings but can only provide sufficient information that can then be used by the reader to determine whether the findings are applicable to the new situation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study, the term

"transferability" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316) has been applied instead of generalisability or external validity. This is because it is not possible for the qualitative researcher to "specify the external validity of an inquiry, he or she can provide only the thick description necessary to enable someone interested in making a transfer to reach a conclusion about whether transfer can be contemplated as a possibility" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316). Transferability in this sense is more dependant upon the similarities that exist between the initial research site and the site to which the results or findings are intended to be transferred, than it is to the representativeness of the sample. In short, transferability of interpretation to other situations depends on the degree of similarity between the original situation and the situation to which it is transferred. Through thick description of the participants and events that take place within it, readers are able to determine whether transferability is possible to their situation.

Dependability

Dependability is the qualitative researcher's equivalent of the conventional term 'reliability', or replicability. Dependability depends on the consistency of the process and the product of the research. Some view that without dependability there is no credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In quantitative research, reliability means that the same tests should produce the same results. For qualitative researchers, this kind of replicability is impossible to realise because the research design is flexible and the research findings are produced by constantly changing interactions between researchers and participants. Therefore, as Guba and Lincoln (1989) state, "Far from being threats to dependability, such changes and shifts are hallmarks of a maturing - and successful - inquiry. But such changes and shifts need to be both tracked and trackable (publicly inspectable)" (p. 242).

When the term dependability is adopted, it may not be necessary to point specifically to the ways in which the study has achieved dependability as a

separate entity. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that it may be "possible using the techniques outlined in relation to credibility to show that a study has that quality, it ought not be necessary to demonstrate dependability separately" (pp. 316 - 317). In light of this, member checking and triangulation as well as an appropriate length of time in the field are deemed to have enhanced the dependability of the study's results.

Triangulation

The use of triangulation in qualitative studies is widely recognised. Triangulation refers to the use of more than one approach to the investigation of a research question in order to enhance confidence in the ensuing findings. Denzin (1978) cited in Janesick (2000) distinguishes four forms of triangulation: Data triangulation: the use of a variety of data sources in a study; Investigator triangulation: the use of several different researchers or evaluators; Theoretical triangulation: the use of multiple perspectives to interpret a single set of data; Methodological triangulation: the use of multiple methods to study a single problem (p. 391).

Two types of triangulation were used in this study, data triangulation and methodological triangulation. In this study, data used for investigation were collected from four visual art teacher educators as well as from 12 student teachers. Methodological triangulation involved three types of interviews which consisted of series, individual, and small-group interviews. In addition, observation was utilised as another method of data collection. The interview provides leads for the researcher's observations and vice versa. The interaction of all the sources and types of data not only enriches the study, but also provides a basis for analysis that would be impossible with only one source. This study's use of multiple methods of data collection provided opportunity for the collection of multiple viewpoints.

Member Checking

Member checking is a key element of credibility and it represents an important aspect of the research process. I adopted the process of member checking outlined by Stake (1995) in two ways—one: of raw data and two: of the interpreted data presented as narrative accounts. In this study, member-checking was carried out with all interview data to ensure that participants confirmed that the data were accurate. I found that member checking served to elicit a sense of reflection on the part of the visual art teacher educators. Having participants review the interview transcripts and analysis helped to facilitate trustworthiness. Participants were able to confirm or deny the accuracy of my interpretation of what they said and what they did. This provided opportunities for them to clarify any discrepancies and expound on any gaps. For example Johan, when given his account took a week to go through the texts and returned the text with corrections on facts such as "Police Force" to "Royal Police", and added a few positive comments concerning my writing. Osman was astonished to see how I interpreted the information I gathered from the interviews and said, "I didn't realise I was such a person but it made me think and reflect on who I am and what I was doing in my teaching. It made me know more about myself from other people's point of view."

Transformation of the Data

Transformation, in line with Wolcott's (2001) usage of the term, refers to three main ways in which qualitative researchers can "do something" with their data; description, analysis and interpretation. It is important to note that in qualitative research each of the categories is not independent. Rather, the boundaries between each category are blurred. The point at which description becomes analysis and analysis become interpretation are not clear.

The transformation of data began from the first tentative moments in the field and continued through to the 'write-up' of the research. The ongoing nature of this process is widely recognised. For example, Stake (1995) asserts that "there

is no particular moment when data analysis begins. Analysis is a matter of giving meaning to first impressions as well as to final compilations" (p. 71). The ongoing nature of data transformation is also recognised by Coffey and Atkinson (1996) who state that "analysis is not a separate task, and it is certainly not a self-contained phase of research" (p. 192). Woods (1986) refers to this transformation as 'speculative analysis' which is concerned with "tentative reflection, perhaps revealing major insights, that is done throughout data collection" (p. 121). This type of speculative analysis was undertaken throughout the data collection process and involved each new piece of data being considered on its own merits in terms of what it offered the study, but also in combination with data that had already been generated.

Description

In this research, the story was told using as much detail as possible. In the writing of my participants' accounts, I used a metaphor to describe my participants. The metaphor used was based on a key characteristic found in the story through the analysis of narratives. Osman's story for example cumulatively presented a portrait of himself as an adventurer who likes to venture into new avenues and is willing to take risk. In the process of writing the stories, I imagined the event being told and extracted the most revealing part of the stories that reflected the beliefs and values of my participants. I began by writing a story about him based on an event that powerfully illustrated his beliefs and values followed by various events that supported his character. Each participant had particular areas that they were keen to talk about. Johan for example more often than not talked about issues concerning discipline whilst Osman and Burn talked about their studio-based teaching approach.

'Storying' was done in and between two languages. I began by transcribing data about Johan. The story was initially written in Malay before being translated in English by an English Language teacher in Malaysia. At a later

stage when I had developed my writing I decided to write my participants' stories directly without having to translate the stories told and subsequently reworked Johan's story reflecting my increased confidence writing in English.

Analysis

Janesick (2000) states that "there is no one best way of analysis" (p. 389) and although there are rigorous guidelines described in the literature, "the ultimate decisions about the narrative reside with the researcher" (p. 389). In this study, I examined the data by employing both narrative analysis and analysis of narrative techniques.

Narrative analysis refers to studies of data consisting of "actions, events, and happenings, but whose analysis produces stories" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 5). Narrative analysis processes draw on a range of data sources in order to analyse theme and identify the emergent themes concerning the phenomenon. These data are subsequently re-worked to create a storied account that illustrates the manner in which these themes are evidenced in the participants' accounts and actions in the world. The outcome of this analysis process is a storied account. Analysis of narrative is studies of data consist of narratives or stories, but whose analysis "produces paradigmatic typologies or categories" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 5). Analysis of narrative processes also draw on a range of data sources in order to analyse theme and identify the emergent themes concerning the phenomenon. The intent of such analysis is not however to re-story the phenomenon; rather it is to identify and present categories of typologies that may explain the phenomenon. Consequently, the outcome of this analysis process is the identification of such categories and typologies, generally illustrated by examples drawn from the data.

The adoption of narrative analysis and analysis of narrative provided a number of additional advantages to the other analysis techniques utilised in the study. These types of analyses enabled the study to "portray the insider's view of

what a particular job is "really" like" (Cortazzi, 2001, p. 386). However, it is important to note that narrative analysis was utilised in line with Kvale's (1996) view that "during the analysis the researcher may alternate between being a "narrative finder" looking for narratives contained in the interviews, and being a "narrative creator" moulding the many different happenings into coherent stories" (p. 201). The use of narrative analysis in terms of its ability to provide an insider's view of visual art teacher educators' work represents a significant advantage for the study. An alternative view of narrative analysis is provided by Polkinghorne (1988) who believes that narrative analysis is concerned with looking beneath the surface of the words to interpret and reconstruct social phenomena.

Analysis of narrative in this study utilises "thematic questions ...asked from the start of the investigation" (Kvale, 1996, p. 187) and helped during the transformation of the data. For example, the narratives gathered from the interviews were analysed based on the sequence and subject of interview questions. Those questions were thematic in a sense that they covered certain themes such as 'Scholarship of Teaching', 'Relationships', 'Teaching Approaches', 'Classroom Management', and 'Art Education'. In addition to the study's research questions, I also asked two secondary questions of the data. First, "What does this tell me?" and second, "what might it mean?" Woods (1986) believes that this represents an important step in transforming the data.

The analysis of data collected via field notes, video recordings of teaching practice, and audio-taped interviews was ongoing. In reference to this, Merriam (1998) writes, "Data collection and analysis is a simultaneous activity in qualitative research. Analysis begins with the first interview, the first observation, the first document read" (p. 119). In this on-going process, data were organised, broken into units, synthesised, and searched for patterns (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Through this process, I came to comprehend not only what good visual art teaching looks like but also learnt about the visual art teacher educators themselves.

Indeed, Coffey and Atkinson (1996) suggest that in qualitative research, "We should never collect data without substantial analysis going on simultaneously. Letting data accumulate without preliminary analysis along the way is a recipe for unhappiness, if not total disaster" (p. 2). They suggest that analysis in qualitative research is,

> not simply a matter of classifying, categorising, coding or collecting data. It is not simply a question of identifying forms of speech or regularities of action. Most fundamentally, analysis is about the representation or reconstruction of social phenomena. (p. 108)

Working from my initial analysis to write the narrative accounts I began by visualising the event told by my participants and endeavoured to rewrite the stories in my own way without changing the actual event. At the same time, I tried to relate my participants' lived experiences with the phenomenon of good visual art teaching.

I constantly checked on the participants' perceptions of good visual art teaching from their life histories. I then wrote detailed analyses of the similarities and differences between my participants. This was followed by analysing the qualitative dimensions on which their underlying similarities and differences could be arranged.

I also transcribed and sorted portions of the observations that exemplified the teacher displaying particular behaviours. I then compared what was observed to what was said during the interviews. The analysed data were interpreted and used to construct narrative accounts that described the method, style, and manner of each visual art teacher educator. Included are the perspectives and the voices of the visual art teacher educators and student teachers and my attempt, as the researcher, to make sense of what I learned (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003).

Interpretation

It has been argued that interpretation in qualitative educational research highlights a research interest "in the particularities of and educational situation *as such*" (Smeyers & Verhesschen, 2001, p. 83) and is not pursued in order to "change or manipulate a situation or the person(s) involved in it (p. 38). Interpretation as it has been applied in the study uses narrative analysis for "systematic interpretations of others' interpretation of events" (Cortazzi, 2001, p. 386). This view is extended by Coffey and Atkinson (1996) who suggest that "data are not inert. They are not a fixed corpus of materials on which procedures of analysis are performed. We should be using data to think with and think about" (p. 191). Interpretations of the data were also developed through consultation and review of the literature, a process which proved invaluable.

Presentation of the Visual art teacher educator's Experiences

The form in which each of the visual art teacher educator's experiences is presented arose from a considerable amount of trial and error. This process also represented an important stage in the transformation of the data.

The difficulties that are associated with writing-up fieldwork are discussed by Clandinin and Connelly (2000) in terms of a number of tensions. Two of the tensions they outlined were particularly pertinent in this study, namely, the way in which the text that I produced would communicate with the reader and how I would represent the visual art teacher educators and the stories that they shared with me.

The focus of the accounts, as one might expect, is on the individual experiences of the visual art teacher educators. Edwards (2001) suggests that "the extent to which the story is a richly illustrated research report, or is a personal narrative, will largely depend on whether the researcher's aim is primarily to produce illuminating research or to offer a critical interpretation"

(p. 133). In light of this, I have aimed to produce narratives that are richly illustrated in order to enhance the likelihood of illumination of these visual art teacher educators' perceptions of good visual art teaching.

The quotes used in each teacher's account were constructed by "manipulating the original words taken from individual interviews" (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 125). I felt that this was an important consideration so that the accounts were approximations of each teacher's experience. I wanted the accounts to represent the visual art teacher educators in a way that felt legitimate to them, but at the same time was authentic to outsiders. I wanted the visual art teacher educators to see themselves, or at least a part of their professional self in the account. Data from student interviews have been more evident in some accounts. This reflects the degree to which students spoke about their experiences in relation to each of the visual art teacher educator participant.

During the development of the narrative of each visual art teacher educator's experience, the issue of representation became apparent. I did not find that it was a "crisis of representation" (Denzin, 1997), but I did need to find a balance in each of the stories where the visual art teacher educators were represented in a professional light while at the same time capturing the unique qualities that make them who they are as visual art teacher educators. This was made increasingly difficult because of ethical aspects associated with the study such as maintaining the confidentiality and anonymity of the visual art teacher educators. This was further compounded by the small population from which the visual art teacher educators were selected.

I provided each visual art teacher educator with an opportunity to read the stories about them. Issues of representation are also important because "the researcher attempts to provide the clearest and most complete narrative of what went on in the field" (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 76). During this process, the issue of whether the visual art teacher educators could be represented in this manner consumed considerable thought and energy. In addition, thoughts

associated with what the visual art teacher educators would say after having read the chapters and more importantly, whether it was possible for someone else to recognise them were central in the writing process.

I had numerous decisions to make while writing about the experiences of each teacher. I found myself in a similar position to that of Clough (1999) who points out that while trying to write about a participant, "there was no method within the means of research that would allow me to evoke him for a reader without violating, through reduction, the nervous complex of meanings that meeting and working with him provoked" (p. 444).

As I read the quotes from each teacher, such is my familiarity with them, I hear their voices. It is extremely difficult to recreate this for the reader because as Wolcott (1994) recognises, the images in the mind of the reader "are limited to the account you provide. They are unable to hear the nuances that you may hear; they were not present to hear them when originally spoken" (p. 15). I have endeavoured through the level of description of each visual art teacher educators' experience to provide sufficient detail for the reader to re-create these visual art teacher educators. The reader will not hear each visual art teacher educators' voice as I do, but they will hear the voice of the visual art teacher educators through my writings.

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter has presented a detailed account of the methodology employed in the study, an examination of the role of interviews and observations in the generation of data, a discussion of issues associated with trustworthiness, the process through which the data were transformed, and how the experience of each teacher was presented in the study. In the following four chapters, the experiences of Johan, Hijas, Osman, and Burn are presented. In order to maintain the anonymity of participants, detailed descriptions of the individuals and their workplace have not been included in any accounts. It is important to

note that the department of art in which they work is a small and close knit community. Therefore whilst every effort has been made to conceal identity, for those close to the department it is possible that they may recognise some of the participants through their account. The narrative accounts lead the reader sequentially through the experiences and understandings of two discipline-based (Johan and Hijas) and two studio-based (Osman and Burn) visual art teacher educators.

Chapter Four:
Johan the Disciplinarian

Discipline and self-discipline are closely interrelated. Self-discipline comes from inside you, while discipline is usually imposed by an outside source. Through self-discipline you become your own boss. With self-discipline, any imposed discipline will not stir any problems in the person. Although it seems like my approaches towards disciplining my students are ultimately based on fear, it depends on how you perceive it. If you perceive it positively, then it helps to elevate your self-discipline.

-Johan

Classroom Management

"Ringgg...Ringgg...Ringgg..." Suddenly a cellular phone rings in the midst of Johan's lecture. All the student teachers look at each other trying to figure out who the owner of the phone is and, perhaps wondering what will happen to the class. The class becomes very quiet. All eyes are focussed on Johan. Johan stops teaching. He moves to the table in front of the lecture. He packs up his lecture notes, switches off the computer, looks at the student teachers with a stern face, sweeping the room from left to right, from back to front, grabs a microphone and says,

I've told you once, and I've warned you early in the semester that I detest any

hand phone ringing during my lecture. It's not that I didn't tell you, did I? As a consequence, I've to stop the class now. Let this be a lesson to all of you.

All the student teachers are perplexed, not knowing what to do: to leave or to stay. As soon as Johan leaves, the class becomes noisy. Perhaps they are upset with their friend who is so careless in not switching off her hand phone. Or perhaps they are upset with Johan's decision to punish all of them, who are innocent, instead of the culprit. And some may feel that Johan is so inconsiderate. What if the phone call is an emergency call? What if it is a matter of life and death? However, those who have attended Johan's lectures before certainly know who Johan is; a disciplinarian who does not compromise.

Johan really despises listening to a hand phone ringing during any formal activities. Johan says,

> When I teach, my approach is like teaching in a school setting. I would remind my student teachers to switch off their hand sets. I would tell them that if during my teaching I hear any hand phone ringing, I'll stop the class immediately and the class would be substituted to Sunday. Frankly speaking, I am serious about stopping the class but not about the Sunday class. Who wants to come and teach on Sunday especially knowing the fact that I live 40kms from the university and Sunday is my day to get together with my beloved family? I was just pulling their legs, when I threatened them with a Sunday class. However, I really hate to hear hand phones ringing during formal activities. Sorry to say, I really, really hate it. It shouldn't be. That's discipline. Sometimes I even see the Chairman in a meeting answering his mobile phone, which is not appropriate. He should either set the phone to the

vibrate or silent mode, or glance at the screen to check on the caller. If it is urgent, however, then it's understandable.

Lesson to be learnt

"Mr. Johan...Sir...Excuse me Sir..." exclaims the owner of the hand phone that rings during the lecture. Johan just walks away without taking heed of the caller.

"Mr. Johan...I'm so sorry Mr. Johan. I didn't mean to do that. I didn't do it intentionally. Please sir...just for once...have mercy please," pleads the student teacher.

Realising that the student did not understand him, Johan stops: "No. The answer is absolutely no. And when I say 'No' that means no. Let this be a lesson to you and the others in future."

Johan is very firm with his decision. To him, the incident should give the student and the whole class a good lesson, although it is a bitter experience for them. This is one of the ways to discipline them. He knows that the news will spread very fast. Soon the whole faculty will know of the incident. That is what Johan wants, for everybody to know and learn a lesson. For Johan, it is not easy for him to take such an action. He rationalises that it is for their own good. There must be repercussions. However, he is also in a dilemma. He realises that a number of students will be victimised by his action. But he feels that if he doesn't take any action, his students will mock him and lose their respect for him for not keeping his word. Then he will have difficulties when it comes to classroom management. So, he thinks that his decision is justified. He is also aware that the incident may deter students from enrolling in his course.

He doesn't care because he is not bothered about it. The fewer the better. Then he can concentrate more readily on his teaching and his students' learning. Right now he has more than enough students in his class. He knows the course he is teaching is not compulsory but because of limited choice, all the student teachers who undertake the art education program will end up enrolling for the course he is teaching. Up to now, his class enrolment has never decreased.

Discipline and self-discipline as central

Johan believes that we should exercise self-discipline. He believes that well-disciplined teachers will not face many discipline problems. Johan cannot relinquish the central role of discipline and self-discipline in his life for it has become part of his routine. For him, there is no need to do so when it provides more benefit than harm. Therefore it is not strange to see why Johan has been very strict with his students. He is trying to inculcate positive attitudes towards discipline and self-discipline in his students. He wants his students to experience the difficulties of developing self-discipline. Johan believes that no one is able to really understand what discipline and self-discipline are all about without having experienced it themselves. According to Johan,

> If we want to talk about discipline, how are we going to talk about disciplining people if we ourselves do not experience it first? Theoretically it's fine. We can plan this, plan that, do it within the time frame, but (to me) we can't even talk about it if we don't experience it ourselves.

To Johan, the ability to impose discipline on oneself and to develop self-discipline are the key factors for a major shift in efficiency and increases the likelihood of reaching any kind of goal. He attributes his success to his self-

discipline which he has developed since he was a child. He points out that, "we cannot all the time rely on other people (to discipline us) telling us what to do and what not but rather we should work out on our own."

Johan recognises that one of the reasons why students fall short of their intellectual potential is their failure to exercise self-discipline. He notices that some student teachers have trouble making choices that require them to sacrifice short-term pleasure for long-term gain. He intends to develop and enhance self-discipline in the students and help them to travel the 'royal road', which according to Johan, means to build academic achievement and other attainments. According to Johan,

> Discipline and self-discipline are closely interrelated. Self-discipline comes from inside you, while discipline is usually imposed by an outside source. Through self-discipline you become your own boss. With self-discipline, any imposed discipline will not stir any problems in the person. Although it seems like my approaches towards disciplining my students are ultimately based on fear, it depends on how you perceive it. If you perceive it positively, then it helps to elevate your self-discipline.

He remembers when he was being disciplined in the Royal Malaysia Police that punctuality was being stressed: "...at 6.00a.m. we must be at the field marching. You would imagine, by 5.45a.m. we would be standing there and not at 6.00a.m."

Johan acknowledges that the discipline that he has developed comes from his five years of training in the Royal Malaysia Police.

> Being in the Royal Malaysia Police is a noble and challenging career. I liked the challenge. I gained a lot; besides good work

> ethics, I have developed self-discipline, good time management, and a strong personality. I was grateful to be a policeman and the benefits were an asset to me when I ventured into the education world.

He relates this experience to his current teaching practice,

> So, if my class is scheduled for 8.00 a.m., then at 7.45 a.m. I am already in the class. By 8.00 a.m. I would have begun my class. I will not be waiting for my students to start my lecture. I exercise this during my learning and teaching sessions, hoping that my students pick up the cue and will do the same thing when they go to schools. If the class begins at 8.00 a.m., it does not mean that we walk into the class at 8.00 a.m.

He is not only punctual in his teaching, but also in his daily life. For instance, during my field work, I did not encounter any problems interviewing him. He was always there, in his office waiting for me with a smile. He responded to my interview transcripts during the member checking process almost immediately. The first interview transcript was returned in less than two hours and so was the second interview transcript, while the third interview transcript was returned in less than thirty minutes.

Managing ourselves before managing others

To make teaching more effective, according to Johan, we need to be able to manage ourselves before managing other people. Johan is very well organised. His workplace is tidy and neat. He arranges his books in the bookcase very carefully, his filing system is well organised, and he arranges his folders in his

computer systematically. In terms of his dress, he wears a necktie during office hours and never fails to wear a lounge suit whenever there is an official ceremony. His shirts are neatly ironed and he tucks them in neatly. This is not common in this particular faculty, where there is another group of visual art teacher educators who oppose the wearing of neckties and formal dress when teaching.

During my field work, I noticed that outside his office, close to the door, he placed all his students' assignments in a box, graded with a date stamped on the front cover of the assignments and signed. Johan believes discipline can be instilled. He states,

> Like during my teaching, I said, "Okay since we are teachers we would instil discipline in our work, reliable, responsible, go to work and to class on time. When we assign work, we make sure that we mark them and offer comments and so on.

I am not sure how long Johan takes to read, grade, and sign assignments, and wonder how thoroughly he reads them. Johan is a very dedicated person. He never goes out for breakfast or lunch. He eats his breakfast before he goes to work, and will take lunch to work. Johan states,

> I don't like to spend my money unnecessarily. It's very much dearer to eat in the stall compared to taking our own lunch. Besides, my wife's cooking is a lot more delicious and nutritious. As you know, I used to face a difficult life and I'm used to being thrifty. In addition, I don't like to waste my time—going to the stall, queuing for food, and chatting with friends aimlessly. The time spent can be benefited by doing my job.

Johan believes that educators need to be responsible and understand their roles.

Johan says,

> When we mentioned calibre, the goal is to be an educator who understands their role. We know that educators are the persons who would pass their knowledge on to others. It is a heavy responsibility for the persons who would pass their knowledge on to others, and this knowledge is then practiced by the others who would finally be rewarded for life. If they think of it spiritually, they would take it as a religious act. InsyaAllah (God willing), they would be a disciplined person who acts responsibly and he/she would not be involved in things beyond the norms. He/She would be a responsible person, inside and out.

Dealing with latecomers

With regard to latecomers, it is understandable that punctuality should be upheld to avoid disorder. Late comers will tend to interrupt the teaching and learning process. Everyone in the class will get distracted. The latecomers themselves will not benefit from being late. On the other hand, there are students that come late for class due to good reasons. It is not strange to see these genuine cases especially when it comes to in-service student teachers who have family to take care of and come from all over the country. In this sense, Johan is no exception. During my classroom observation, he was eight minutes late. It is very unusual of him to be late but of course, he has an explanation for that. According to Johan,

> My class was close to the faculty office…I've something to

> do at that time which was urgent...but that seldom happens. I will normally enter the class very much earlier if there's no other class prior to my lecture...and the latest is 5 minutes. If it is more than 10 minutes, I've already informed my class that they can leave the class and it means that the class is cancelled and will be replaced to another day.

Johan is baffled about why students still come late for their lectures even after being informed and warned. He understands that some of his student teachers have another lecture before his lecture and that is understandable. He even goes to the extent of delaying his class:

> So, prior to class, I will ask if any of my students have a back-to-back class. If they have any lecture before mine, then I will delay the class for 15 minutes, which I consider as already too long. After 15 minutes, I will lock all the doors. It's amazing to see some of the students take more than 15 minutes to walk a distance of 200 meters. I'm sure most of the lecturers will release their students early if they have another class after their lectures. I do the same thing. My class for example, I will let my students go 10 minutes earlier if they have another class after mine. So, if I give them 10 minutes, another lecturer gives 15 minutes, it becomes 25 minutes. Hey...come on...25 minutes to walk to the class? This is absurd if they are still late. This must be the case of oversleeping or purposely not coming to class. If they have a class after mine, I will take note and I will end my class earlier, so that those students can attend the next class in time.

There was another incident when he locked the lecture hall from inside to deter any late comers to his lecture and as a way of training the students about the

meaning of punctuality and how to deal with it.

It's about 9.45a.m. Johan starts walking to the lecture theatre from his office. It doesn't take long for him to reach the lecture theatre for the distance is only about 50 metres. On the way to the lecture theatre, he notices that some of his students are following him. He quickens his footsteps and so do the students. He realises that those students must have taken heed of his warning that nobody is to come late to his lecture. Upon reaching the lecture theatre, he switches on the lights, turns on the computer, inserts his USB thumb drive, selects the folder that contains the Microsoft Power Point file he is going to use in his teaching, adjusts the overhead projector, and sits down on a chair in front of the lecture theatre, close to the large table provided by UoEM for the visual art teacher educators. Soon a few more of his students come in. It doesn't take long for the lecture theatre to fill-up. He looks at his watch.

"Hmmm.... it's 10 a.m.," whispers Johan to himself. "I think I'd better lock the door now," he continues talking to himself.

At 10.00 a.m. exactly Johan goes to the front doors and locks the doors. He then asks one of the students to lock the back doors of the lecture theatre so that nobody can enter from the back door.

A few minutes later, he hears someone pulling the door knob of the main entrance. He ignores it. The students in the lecture theatre laugh. They consider themselves fortunate for being punctual to the lecture. Perhaps they are lucky because they don't have to attend any lecture before Johan's class, they don't have to deal with car breakdowns or transport problems; or they don't have any family problems. Johan looks at the door, and then looks at the students. They all laugh.

"Oh my God! We've been locked out," says one of Johan's students who have come late. "What should we do?" Unfortunately, nobody knows the answer to

their problem but Johan.

According to Johan,

> To me, if the students really want to learn, by all means they will make sure they arrive in time. If they are late, they should wait outside the lecture theatre until the lecture finishes and apologise. And the next time, they will not repeat the same mistake, and will come to the lecture earlier. It was effective. The students were never late again for this class and would be rushing to the class to beat me to the class.

Discipline at home

Johan's family knows how strict he is when it comes to discipline, punctuality, and keeping to rules and order. They have experienced it before. Whether they like it or not, they have to live with it. Johan always believes in discipline as the key to a successful life.

"Tomorrow at 8.30 a.m. we're going shopping," says Johan to his children and his wife, Rohaya.

"Where're we going to dad?" Asks one of his children.

"KL," replies Johan briefly.

The next day, early in the morning Johan has already prepared himself for shopping. Johan has no problem getting up early in the morning. It has been his routine since he was a child. Everyday he will wake up about 5.30 a.m. take a shower, perform his morning prayer, and while waiting for the breakfast to

be prepared by his wife, he will read the newspaper. In his home, everybody wakes up early. That's the discipline that has been instilled in his children and wife. Nobody dares complain.

About 8.15 a.m. he grabs the car key, goes to the car that's parked outside his house, starts the engine and waits inside the car. He keeps on looking at his watch, restlessly waiting for his children and his wife to come out from the house and get into the car. At 8.25 a.m. he goes back to his house,

"Hurry up! It's almost 8.30 a.m. now," Johan reminds his family.

Immediately all his children come out but his wife is still in his house. Johan is getting very impatient. He gets into his car and without any delay, exactly at 8.30 a.m. he drives away leaving his wife behind. To Johan, he isn't joking when he tells his family that he's going to leave behind anybody who's late. Poor Rohaya. She protested, but what can she do. Johan has left. She keeps it to herself.

"As if I don't know about time management and purposely being late. I also know about discipline. I was also a police officer before we got married!" Rohaya grumbles. She looks very dissatisfied with Johan's decision to leave her behind.

"Great, that's great! You leave me behind. Don't you know that I've to do so many chores? I've to do the cleaning, preparing for breakfast, preparing the children, preparing myself, checking the windows and doors whether they are locked or not, and many other things!" She continues to grumble.

That was the most that she could do. She is bounded by the Malay ethical system of 'budi', the values of appropriateness of conduct, politeness and good manners which are considered as vital ingredients for harmonious living. This reflects her character and influences the way she relates to others, especially to her husband. It shows good breeding and a dignified social control, which is

an essential quality in Malay society.

Johan isn't aware of the responsibilities that his wife has undertaken. Perhaps he is being eccentric, self-indulgent....or self-centred. What he knows is to adhere strictly to his promise and to maintain discipline. Later he realises that he made a mistake by leaving his wife behind, but he was not aware of this until after he was approached by Rohaya when he came back from shopping with his children.

However, to Johan, the discipline that he imposes on others, such as his students and his family is not without reason. It is all thought through carefully, although sometimes the decision made appears unjust according to others' worldview.

> I did not realise that before leaving the house, she would make sure that the house was securely locked and so on. Simultaneously, I talked to my children why I did what I did. That was during the earlier part of my marriage, but later on I have to understand that men do not need to prepare themselves as women before leaving the house. So, I told her to get started preparing at 7.00 a.m. if we were to go out at 9.00 a.m. That is what I meant by how our experience has helped us in our teaching.

Johan learns from his mistakes in order to improve himself as well as from his successes. Johan not only learns the lesson by himself but also he shares it with his family. Henceforth Johan will make sure he will carefully consider all factors before making any decisions.

The story-teller

Johan is also a good story-teller. To him, story telling in teaching and learning are inseparable. He tells stories during his teaching to relate his experiences and his students' experiences. His inclination towards art also saw Johan as a story teller. He tells stories through his art such as through mural paintings, diorama, and graphic design.

> In discussing my past, even in the police, I was always inclined to the arts. In 1978, I took part in my first exhibition in the National Museum. Sorry, 1977 I had participated in two exhibitions; in the National Museum and in the Kuala Kubu Police College. So, when given the opportunity for any members of the force who were interested, I volunteered and I participated in the exhibition. My art work was about the Royal Malaysia Police and the society. When I was an officer, I saw my strength in that, I was given the opportunity. I was the only one selected to represent the Royal Malaysia Police based on my artistic prowess. In a six month session, I mastered my routine, for only 2 – 3 months, I practised my marching and the drill, and for the remainder of my time, I was in the studio. I assisted the Police Museums in PULAPOL to draw murals, dioramas, to create graphics and so on. Later on I was stationed at the Campbell Police Department; I asked to be stationed at the Academic Trainee Branch because I was interested.

We are all storytellers. It's the way that humans communicate. Each of us tells stories every day: about the horrible traffic jam on the way home; about the way the children acted at the grocery store last night; about the great movie we saw over the weekend. We all have the ability to communicate through stories.

However according to Johan, he does not tell just any story, he tells meaningful stories. Stories that he hopes will connect him with his students and promote bonding, engaging them in such a way that they can see him as an ally or collaborator on their learning journey. He also tells stories to help him close the gaps and win back attention when a chasm has opened up separating him from his students. The stories he uses normally come from his own life experiences and sometimes from other people's experiences. Even during my interview sessions with him he tells a number of interesting stories. Johan reminiscences,

> While playing when I was young, I liked to be a story-teller and injected suspense in my stories. It was even so, as I grew older. During my school years, the same attitude continues. For me, the story is far more than the content. Meaning is illuminated in the dynamic process of reciprocal telling and listening. It is experience and event, more than text or performance. The powerful truth of oral tradition emerges in the inner enactment of the story shared between listener and teller.

His story telling prowess builds up and develops progressively. He never stops telling stories. Not only that, he writes stories too. His efforts are publicly recognised.

> I was also involved in writing literary and cultural pieces since 1973. Up to now (2005), I have written 20 short stories, 50 poems, TV dramas, Radio dramas and three children's novels, and articles for various magazines and local newspapers.

One of the driving factors that makes Johan keep on writing and telling stories is his experience of poverty. At least by writing he is able to earn some income

to make ends meet, in addition to his salary. This is not strange to Johan. Nor to most of the teachers or visual art teacher educators in Malaysia. Moonlighting is not something to be ashamed of. Poverty has been a consistent theme at every point of his life. His childhood years were full of obstacles. He still remembers when he didn't bring any pocket money to school and relied on tap water for sustenance during the day, many times without taking any breakfast. It was 'excruciating' for him.

He remembers when he was in primary school when a teacher sneered at him and said, "Look at him. He is carrying a salted fish bag to school!"

> The reason was, I was late to school and walked straight into the class. I was supposed to knock on the door but there were no door to knock on. He threw me out of the class. I was humiliated. I felt embarrassed. I promised to myself, if I were a teacher, I will not do that to my students. I was insulted in front of my friends.

However he cherishes his childhood years. How he wishes that the clock could be turned back, which is impossible. He knows that. He lives in the real world and not in the past. He has no hard feelings towards his teachers, especially the teacher who humiliated him. Nor has he hard feelings towards his colleagues in the Royal Malaysia Police who jeered at him for his ambition to be a successful person. He has long forgiven the teacher and all his colleagues.

"I will survive"

Hardship did not prevent him from striving for success. To him perseverance, hard work, and patience are the key elements to success. Reflecting on his

success, Johan tells...

> I remember at one time, at my lowest point, I was left with RM5.00 to spend in one week. And that included petrol for my motorbike. The rest, God only knows. Once in three years, three Eid's celebrations, I did not go back to my hometown for the celebrations because I was short of money. My father (stepfather) was dying, and eventually passed away, I went home alone by bus to cut on cost. I have never told anyone about this until today. The salary for a primary school teacher that I received while studying was on half pay, about RM250.00 only per month (Equivalent to approximately AUD90). My housing loan was RM216.00 per month, and fortunately my application to defer the payment for three years was approved. It was the most excruciating experience in my life with regards to my financial status. To help with the expenditures I used my talent in writing. I wrote articles for magazines such as Fantasi, Utusan Malaysia, Berita Harian, and scripts for television dramas and radio.

The difficulties that he had to face in his life makes him very determined, strong-hearted, and he takes things seriously. He advises his students not to take things too lightly. He hates students complaining of difficulties because he has gone through all those difficulties before arriving at the stage he is now. Johan treats his painful experience as part and parcel of life and looks at it positively. As a way out, Johan uses his experience in good ways. He often relates his experiences to his teaching and learning. In short, it influences his teaching.

> I always remind my student teachers not to differentiate themselves from their students. As much as possible, we need to try to build a family situation, and not build any walls

between them and their students.

Building relationships

When Johan became a teacher, he was very passionate about his teaching. He does not hope for any kind of financial rewards for his efforts but hopes that his ex-students will remember him in positive ways, the way he remembers those teachers who have helped him. He works hard to build strong relationships with his students. Johan treats his students with care and love. He says, "I was very close with the students. They were like my own children." For that, he is loved by his students. To him one of the things about teaching that he really enjoys is unsolicited compliments.

> ...for the first time in my life, I cut my first birthday cake prepared by the students ... they had prepared the cake, some drinks and nuts. I cried out of sadness and joy. I had never celebrated my birthday in my life. It was too special. I did not know and was never given this privilege before in my life, I was never appreciated. When I walked into class, all the doors and windows were closed. I stepped in, and I was so surprised. Everyone sang "Happy Birthday to you." I was dumbfounded. Speechless. I was not thinking straight. I was so touched with my Year Four students.

He did not only look after his students but also looked after the classroom. To him a neat, clean, and beautiful classroom represents the attitudes of not only the teacher but also the students. He remembers his Grade Four class won the Most Beautiful Class Award, and the Cleanest Class Award. For Johan, teachers can only instruct the students to upkeep the cleanliness of the class

and to beautify the class but implementing it relies mostly on the students. This is important to Johan.

Johan always tried to make his teaching interesting. He cared for his students. Although Johan seemed to be very strict and full of discipline, he was approachable. Once there was a student who was considered to be very mischievous by most teachers. The other teachers were finding it difficult to accept him. Johan reminisces,

> I said, "You are now my son. You have to care for me." I tried to change his perception so that he would be more responsible. I said, "you are too important to me, and if you are not around I will be in trouble (difficulty)'. I appreciated him. His parents came and saw me and thanked me for disciplining their son. He said, "Sir, I heard that you are quitting. I came personally to thank you for being able to discipline my son. I know that many teachers hate him." I said, "Not hate, but your son is so naughty that the others teachers did not know what to do. He puts a dead bird in a teacher's bag." Praise be to Allah, I was able to reform him and we were able to see changes in him. I often remind my students not to segregate students and always create a family environment.

His approach towards his students has changed his students' perception towards his teaching. Johan sees his students' perceptions change from being negative to positive.

> There were those who failed in all the other subjects but passed their art subject. So, we built their confidence. There were students who only like the art subject. There were a few who said that their interest is because of my presence. It has

> reached to that extent. Perhaps my approach made them interested. We would go to the studio, there was no pressure in the class, we would listen to music, softly, or we would watch the television. The class were always lively. The students were able to bring along their own t-shirt and print their own t-shirt. It was very effective...I would also crack spontaneous jokes.

The relationship has no borders. He was not only loved by his students, but also by the parents:

> There were students who transferred to other schools, and when they were moving, their parents came and snapped photographs, and hugged me. The parents also said, "I have never heard my son praise a teacher before. I have come to thank you from the bottom of my heart".

* * *

Inculcating values

Johan believes that teaching is not only confined to the classroom. It is not a rigid and straight forward process, which involves only transmission of knowledge from visual art teacher educator to student teachers. Teaching is also about inculcating values. He strongly believes that education without values is worthless. According to Johan,

> There are numerous values that we would like to instil such as 'gotong-royong' (cooperation), cleanliness, patience and tolerance. These are values that should be instilled. We should be the guides. The execution would be according to the

> situations. Okay, what do we plan to do now? To create. What? Okay. Sculptures. What are the materials? After we have used all the materials, what should we do? Oh...the cleanliness aspects. After using all the materials the room should be cleaned. The values inculcated during the learning and teaching should contribute to their Visual Art Education.

He provided an example of how he inculcated values in his students,

> Examination classes, for example, the classes which I cared for. If I wanted to put up any notices, I would arrange it nicely. I asked my students to decorate the bulletin board. I would display the selected drawings. This is the kind of discipline (values) that we would like to instil. Indirectly, we would be teaching students to tidy their house, tidy their rooms, tidy their books. These are values that we would like to instil, indirectly because this is knowledge, not education. This is practical knowledge. Not education that we would receive a scroll on. Education does not necessarily provide any knowledge; if the study is about China's history, what would the students gain from it...nothing. The level of the knowledge that we could think of from this is just the historical aspects but we should have learned, the perseverance aspects...its adventurous perseverance. That is the knowledge that we should instil. Not merely the events that took place.

Formative learning

Johan reminisces about his childhood…

> When I reflect on my childhood, I liked being a leader… And when the teacher asked, "Who wants to read, who can assist me to draw? Who wants to go to the front?" and so on, I would volunteer. At that time, I did not know that my attitude was perceived as someone who desires popularity or someone who likes to stand out. When I was in the Royal Malaysia Police I liked being a leader. While in a group, I would always lead the group (squad). When I was at the Dining Hall, it was the same (leading role). Indirectly, perhaps I was not aware that I like to be in the fore-front.

While in high school, Johan's leadership trait shone. Johan remembers,

> In high school, while I was in form 1, during the Science subject, usually during the biology or the chemistry, if I see the teachers finding it hard to draw, I volunteered. So, I was the artist until I was in Form 5. There was a time when the teachers called me 'professor' during the chemistry class. For the apparatus preparation, I was the person who would voluntarily help the lab assistant to gather the apparatus.

Johan is very assertive and confident and has no doubt about his skills and ability. These factors contribute to his leadership. He's very self-assured when talking about his experience, skills and knowledge. Perhaps this is due to his academic qualifications and working experiences—having taught in primary schools, secondary school, and higher education. He repeatedly refers to his abilities,

> Usually, my paintings were exhibited either at the bulletin

> board, at the canteen and so forth. What thrilled me was that some of my friends were unable to draw as well as me. So, I made them pay me. Give me colours and a piece of paper. So, I got them. Then, the paintings were selected to be exhibited. If 10 paintings were exhibited from 10 students, the truth of the matter is, there was only one painter… the same person…hahahaha.

Another occasion was when Johan undertook a public examination. Johan says,

> during the exam…usually, the invigilators will sit next to me and would not move and walk around. He looked at me and sometimes, they would make comments like, 'What if you were to do this?' I was happy. My paintings were alive and quite successful.

It is therefore not strange to see Johan acting as a leader, and sometimes a very blunt and straight forward leader. He still remembers when he was the Head of Panel for Art Eduction in his school where some of the teachers wanted to teach Mathematics during the art period. This was due to Art Education not being an examination subject and not included in the public examination.

"I guess we should teach Mathematics during the Art period. Since Maths is an important subject and included in the exams while Art is not, we should concentrate on teaching Maths whenever possible," suggests one Maths teacher during the teacher's meeting.

"Please do not do that. Teach art during art class. Please do not do that to the Head of Panel. Have respect for me okay?" pleads Johan.

Therefore the school's administrator decided not to teach Maths during the Art Lesson. Without Johan's objection, most probably the school would have carried out their plan as had happened in many schools in Malaysia, where art

is not considered as an important subject. It's just a frill. This kind of leadership helps Johan to sustain the value of Art, at least in his school.

Johan is also not satisfied when Art Education is not included as one of the examination subjects in school. His leadership again shines.

"We can't include Art in our school exam schedule," says the Senior Assistant.

"Why not?" Asks Johan.

"It's because we do not have the paper (Art Education) as an exam subject prior to this," explains the Senior Assistant.

"There's no way Art should be excluded. Without the exams, Art will be deemed as not important and this will affect the students' attitude. It will make them think that this subject is not important and of lesser value compared to other subjects!" replies Johan.

And he continues,

"As the Head of Panel of Art Education, I demand you include the paper (in the school examination schedule) or I will lodge a report to the State Education Department!' warns Johan with his stern face.

Afraid of having to face any reprimands, the Senior Assistant acquiesces to Johan's demand,

"Okay...Okay...I'll include Art as one of the exam papers," agrees the Senior Assistant.

Johan believes that he must provide reasons for his action and not let others take over the subject without a fight.

Teachers and community outreach

Johan is a community minded person, and feels that he holds social responsibility. Therefore it is not strange to see Johan bluntly scolding a teacher in his housing area for not committing himself to society,

"Do you know my occupation?" Asks Johan.

"Yes, you are a lecturer," answers the teacher.

"Even a lecturer would sit and mingle in the 'surau' (a small mosque). What do you do at home? Do you think that you are so great now that you are teaching in a boarding school and need not mix with other people?" scolds Johan.

Johan feels that in order to get things to work someone has to speak up and remind teachers of their social responsibilities.

> Then, they would come to the *surau*[14]. Do you see the teachers nowadays? That is a contributing factor as to why teachers have lost their respect, unlike the olden days, because they themselves do not respect the community. If you respect the community, then, you have earned their respect. For example, during the painting of the surau, that particular teacher was also absent.

Johan is committed to the school and society in which he lives. He makes full

[14] A place where Muslims gather to perform their prayers and Islamic activities.

use of his ability and knowledge by contributing to the school and society in his area. Therefore he is respected in the area where he lives and is nominated as the President of the Parent-Teachers' Association (PTA) and the Secretary of the surau (small mosque) in his housing area.

> This is how I see it. If I...err...I am the PTA's President of my son's school. With this role, I find it easier to contribute to the society. The school often invites me to motivate the students. If there are any discipline problems regarding the school children, we would bombard their parents first. I think it is helpful. If we do not help them and the 'kampong' (village) folks realise, then I guess I'm not doing the right thing. I believe that in any activities involving the parents, everybody must be included. No matter how busy we are, we must participate. The PTA meeting for example is only a once-a-year event. Please do not tell me that you cannot make it. By attending the meeting at least we would know our children's teachers or even the Principal. AT LEAST...we know our children's friends. AT LEAST!

He always reminds his students to become part of society and contribute to its well-being.

> During the Practical Training brief, I told them that they have to do what I did. You have to get to know everyone from the moment you step into the school gate, even the school gardener. For example, if someone asks you where is Johan's house, and he does not know, then he must have been an outsider. Everyone knows me in the area I live. The point is we must introduce ourselves to the society and we will benefit from it.

I myself participate in a game of table tennis, and a few other games. Once you are done with your work, it is time for the community. Based on this, I see that I have earned the highest respect from my community. They would come and see me first before playing 'takraw' (a traditional game). The truth of the matter is, I am nobody but I play my role in the community. I would explain this to my students that they should be an active participant in the society.

To him, teaching also involves a lot more. It includes interpersonal communication skills with parents and the community.

Teaching in a higher education setting

In the higher education setting, the scenario differs. In regard to the teacher-student relationship, he knows that children and adults are two different groups of people. Therefore they should be treated accordingly. To Johan approaching students in higher education is more complicated than in a school setting. In the school setting, teachers are the all encompassing authority in the classroom. They are the ones who make the rules, manage the classroom, dispense information, and decide whether the children know enough to pass. In the higher education setting, teaching is about sharing and developing knowledge and it does not occur in a vacuum. Visual art teacher educators face fewer problems in terms of discipline, focus less on class management and more on engaging students in learning. Johan says,

> I like to create an atmosphere in my class in which my students are willing to air their opinions freely without being

> afraid of being penalised. I'll convince them that I won't mark them down if they can substantiate their arguments, rationally and logically. I hate students giving away their opinions emotionally and without substantive reasons. However, so far I've never experienced such an occasion.

In relation to that Johan feels that learning should not always be made easy for the students. He sees the teaching and learning process as confronting,

> I don't see teaching as a form of knowledge transmission, but rather I see learning as confronting the students with information that makes them think. For example, in my Philosophy of Art class, when I was teaching about Socrates, I would show them a picture of Socrates wearing his outfit which is similar to the Muslims who perform their Hajj (in Mecca). Then I'll ask my students if they'd consider Socrates as a Muslim based on the fact that he was wearing sort of a Muslim outfit. My intention was to stir the students' mind and emotions. The important thing is to make them think, participate in classroom activity and have a better understanding of the topic.

As a mature age student, Johan was very confrontational in his ideas. Whenever possible, if there was any chance he would always voice his opinion which Johan considers 'is often controversial.'

> During my days at the college...I was already aware of the learning and teaching process. I was someone who had working experience. So, at this level we know how to differentiate between good and bad teaching. And when I was in the Royal Malaysia Police I was in the education department and trained the new recruits. When we are at this

> level, we are able to identify those who are prepared or those who are not. I liked to be involved in activities. As students, when we have anything to say, we were honest about it. I like to be involved in everything. I think this is the learning process to build up confidence to speak up in public, to nurture ourselves. At the same time I wanted to see the lecturers' preparations. There are those who came unprepared. So I learned from that and I am always prepared. If we as lecturers are unable to answer any questions, we have to admit that we do not know the answers and we should open it to the floor for some assistance. We are not The Most Knowledgeable (referring to The Almighty God).

To Johan, his experience teaching in UoEM is different compared to that in schools. In the higher education setting, according to Johan, "we are in a world, with expertise and qualifications." He continues,

> We know our goals. We know those students. We studied their background, knowledge and so forth. We would like to provide them with the appropriate knowledge; from them knowing nothing to knowing something. For example from not knowing any of the local artists to someone who is familiar with the local artists. At least, there is enough information that they could bring along to the schools. If they leave the institution empty-handed, I do not think that they are to be blamed, but we (the visual art teacher educators) have failed.

When he teaches, his approach is that, "when we need to connect with our experience as an art lecturer we should know our field."

> Lecturing in art criticism and art history, I need to know my

area of expertise. The field is wide. For example, I have met and talked to 70-80% of artists in Malaysia and I have gone to their exhibitions. When we talk about their art work, we can explore their ideas and the background their work is based on. Not just knowing their work but knowing them. I remember someone said, "If we want to appreciate any art work, and if we do not know the artist, we have no right to appreciate it" and I said, "True. We should not know the artist only during his living days". It means we should know the artist even though he has passed away and we need to know about his whole life.

Reflection

Johan will take time to reflect on himself and his actions. He believes that self-reflection is a part of discipline, and a way to look at our strengths and weaknesses. Self-reflection means that we think about what we have done and use that to improve our performance in the future. We also think about how best to behave rather than just acting impulsively without thought. By reflection, he intends to keep improving himself so that one day he can look back and say that he did the best he could and achieved his maximum potential.

His learning experiences also taught him to be wiser in his teaching approach. He remembers vividly when his teachers recognised his efforts and that really gave him a moral boost and enhanced his confidence. He realises appreciation from teachers as being very important towards enhancing a child's confidence and self-esteem. He recalls the appreciation by his art teacher when he was in a primary school,

I think I had begun my interest in drawing during my

> elementary school. I think I was in year 4 and the teacher was drawing a fish. I remember drawing the fighting fish which people in Kedah called 'sepilai'. My teacher took my drawing and made it an example. I was very proud. From there, with the teacher's support, I drew other animals, like deer. If it was the Drawing subject, I knew mine was the best.

Even in high school, Johan received the same treatment by his Science teacher. His teacher appreciated his volunteer job as an unofficial 'Lab Assistant', and 'Resident Artist'. That made him very interested in the subject.

> Therefore, this is my strongest subject (Science). What made me become interested in the subject is, perhaps, the appreciation that the teacher gave to his students. We should appreciate the students who assist us. Every student has their strengths. We should not be negative towards helpful students.

Johan believes that teachers play an important role in identifying students' talent. He does not think that there is anyone else who is qualified to do this (identifying student's talent). He also learns about how effective peer learning is. He learns about peer learning when he exchanges ideas with his friend, FBI. He says,

> Then, I had a friend. His name is FBI. He could draw too. But he liked to draw figures whereas I liked to draw animals. He liked to draw 'silat' (martial art) figures. So, we were the only two who could draw in the class. When I saw him drawing figures, I learned how to draw them too.

Learning from this experience, Johan sees that there is no compromise for discipline. Johan tries to be a very disciplined educator. He does not want to

repeat the mistakes that he observed in some of his lecturers.

> I don't like an undisciplined lecturer who comes to lecture without adequate preparation. I still remember one of my lecturers who did not display the professionalism of a lecturer. He didn't resemble a lecturer. His personality didn't fit as a lecturer. He didn't wear proper clothing, he smoked while teaching, used foul language, wore thongs, was not punctual, was sometimes absent, and when he taught, he would sit on a table while shaking his legs. He had no teaching plan, no notes, no course structure, and so forth.

Good visual art teaching in a higher education

With regard to good visual art teaching in higher education, Johan believes that there are many factors that contribute to good visual art teaching. Personally Johan feels that,

> Prior knowledge and experience is important during the planning of my teaching. To me, preparation must be thorough because if it is not, I would be very uneasy in my teaching. We must know our materials inside and out. I will always be prepared before I enter a class; the facilities and teaching equipment are ready and working. Imagine what will happen if I was to insert the thumb drive and it does not perform, it will be a disaster. If we were to speak, how long can we last? What else is there to show? Teaching will not be effective. So, the facilities must be up-to-date.

To improve his teaching, Johan thinks that professional development is unavoidable. It is the heart of quality improvement that leads to quality teaching.

> There is no doubt that professional development is important. Otherwise how do educators improve their teaching competency, update curricula, integrate new teaching and research methodologies, meet the growing needs of students, and increase students' performance?

Johan also believes that research is important because it provides us with information that enables us to respond to the outcomes of the research and plan the way we teach. Research according to Johan does not mean formal scholastic research but can also be a simple reference to articles, journals and books. To Johan, good visual art teaching and learning involves achieving the goal of teaching.

> In the visual art teacher educators' context, what is it that he/she desires? If the goal is clear and the students understand it, when they graduate, they will remember the lesson till the day they die. That's good visual art teaching. It is not that as soon as they step out of the university, they would have forgotten everything. This is unacceptable. The best thing is for them to be able to relate the knowledge to the reality of life. Good visual art teaching is also about deep understanding in the teacher, himself or herself. An art teacher's role is not merely teaching using a master-apprenticeship model, but also as cultural workers, mentors, critics, and analysts.

To Johan, teaching is also an art and needs specific skills. One of the skills needed is tactful teaching.

> Sometimes during my teaching, I try to relate my teaching to the reality of society. We use this real situation to relate it to the student's experiences. We were once students and I find it interesting when we were able to relate our study with our life experiences. We must relate it to life. It must be relevant. When our teaching is not life related, the students would not know how to utilise the knowledge. For example, the students know of sculptures and their usage. The individual development allows them to appreciate and respond towards the art productions and the environment. If a student loves sculpture they will say, "Aha...this sculpture is an aesthetic project" and they should preserve it. I give an example of the demolition of artefacts and intellectual property in Iraq by the US during the Gulf War. Everything was demolished. Perhaps by relating this catastrophe to my teaching will make my students understand the value of art and remember my teaching better.

He does not like his teachers who teach straight to the point, without taking into account their students' background and their students' ability. He feels that in his learning if he was to enter a class, and if any of the lecturers did not try to get to know their students better in terms of getting to know their students' background, personality, knowledge, and skills, he would not be interested in the class. Therefore, in his teaching, he always relates his experiences to his teaching and he feels that what he has done helps his students to remember his teaching better. Johan is sceptical about the understanding of visual art teacher educators about their roles and responsibilities.

> The question now is, are they aware of their roles and responsibilities? In the higher learning institutions, public or private, the art teachers are actually able to act upon their

> important roles. The society would never be aware of its importance if the art teachers themselves are not confident with themselves. Nevertheless, the reasons for the emerging confidence crisis come within the art teachers themselves. The question now is whether the decision to be an art teacher is motivated out of deep interest? Is the decision based on the ability within, the gifted talent or being motivated by a second party? Or is the decision due to the desire to contribute socially for the society, race and nation? The answer lies within oneself.

He believes that art teachers are the major contributors to excellence in the discipline. They were not merely creating images and forms, their roles and responsibilities are bigger and more challenging. According to Johan,

> The art teachers' roles and responsibilities are broad. There's continuity of roles and responsibilities wherever we are, inside or outside the classroom. Teachers teach for the sake of their students. Their duties are to ensure deep comprehension of the importance of art. Suitable to their duties as cultural workers, the art teacher must put themselves forward in every activity that they are involved in.

Conclusion

Johan's narrative demonstrates how he has learned from the past, personal strife and painful experiences. Johan describes how he drew on those life lessons to create a personal and professional self with a strong sense of purpose

and desire to help others through his teaching. His narrative account showed how he learned to create a new vision for his life, to accept the totality of his whole being, and to work with his gifts and imperfections. He learned the importance of discipline and applied that in his life and his teaching. Johan is a man who believes that discipline is the key to success. Without discipline, we can never achieve our goal. He models what discipline and self-discipline is all about. He believes 'Leadership by Example' is the best way to inform people of the importance of discipline. That's what he intends to inculcate in his students. He does that directly, through the lecture or through an individual approach. He does that indirectly too, by telling and writing stories, and through art works. For example, to develop social responsibility amongst his students, he would tell about himself being a part of the society where he lives and how he contributes to the society and how the society benefits from him. He would then design his curriculum to include community outreach and how the students can contribute through their own art works. Johan believes that discipline covers every aspect of our lives, be it at work, at home, in society and most of all within ourselves. Johan acts as a self-disciplined person, and is able to use his interests in art and his experience of being disciplined in the police force, and childhood experiences, to obtain control over his life and live in harmony and contentment with his family and society.

Chapter Five:
Hijas the Social Philosopher

Hijas is no doubt very knowledgeable, not only in his own area of expertise but also in other areas. I have truly learned a lot about art education and how it should be related to our lives, especially our teaching lives.

-Student Teacher

Formative experiences

Hijas recalls when he was six years old. He faced a traumatic experience, an experience that has changed his life. It resulted in him missing 10 years with his family. The incident happened when he was living with his parents in Empang Baru police barracks in Ipoh. Less than three years after World War II ended Communist terrorists began a bold policy of hit and run violence in Malaya aimed at demoralising the elected leaders. After several men prominent in political and private circles had been assassinated the Malayan Emergency was declared in June 1948. It was not lifted until July 1960. Hijas was born the year the Malayan Emergency was declared. He was sent to live with his uncle for security reasons.

"Bang...bang...bang...bang..." Hijas heard gunfire exchange between the police and the communists. Hijas' mother held him in her arms, looked at him and said: "My son, you're too young to understand what's happening...just

pray to God that nothing will happen to us."

Hijas and his family hid inside the underground stockade, not knowing their fate, while his father, a policeman fought against the communists. Nobody in the stockade was able to see what was happening outside. Everyone was afraid that something might happen to them if they were spotted by the communists. The police could not tell them what was going on as they were fighting for their lives.

Recollecting this memory, Hijas states,

> When I heard the first gunshot, I felt my heart sank. It was so loud followed by numerous more. I heard gunshots initially from outside the stockade, which obviously made us very concerned about my father's safety and ours. Fortunately nothing happened to any of us.
>
> The unsettled situation made my parents send me to live with my uncle, who was a religious teacher in Belemang, Muar. There I started schooling when I was only six. I stayed with him for ten years far away from my family. I always felt like a stranger. It was really uncomfortable. That lifestyle has developed my character as it is. I believe that I can survive on my own, make my own decisions, and be firm. The only entertainment was my friends, but I had to take along my three cousins whose ages were one, two, and three years old each time I went to meet my friends. Later on when I was in standard six, another two of my cousins joined in. I had to look after them as well. Although I was not happy for it restricted my play time, but it helped me to understand about greater responsibilities such as child-minding.
>
> When I was living with my uncle, I had always felt dissatisfied with the way I was treated by my aunt which I felt

was not fair. I never had a chance to study at home, not even for the school examinations.

However Hijas was fortunate to have Cikgu Isa[15] as his teacher. Cikgu Isa had always been a mentor to him. More often than not, Cikgu Isa would encourage him to study hard and look after his health, especially when he had skin complaints.

"Hey Hijas! You're a good looking person but you've scabies all over your legs. Why don't you treat them medically?" advised Cikgu Isa.

Hijas just kept quiet. He knew there was not much he could do as he could not afford the medicine. In addition, there was no clinic around.

"Here...let me help you to apply the medicine," Cikgu Isa offered his help.

Hijas felt embarrassed yet thankful to Cikgu Isa, his class teacher. In return, he vowed to himself to listen to whatever Cikgu Isa advised him. He was so grateful for the way Cikgu Isa treated him, and cherished the compassion he showed him.

Hijas' childhood and schooling experiences have taught him to be tough in his life. He realised that good early childhood experiences do count tremendously, and providing children with an early childhood education means much more than making them smarter. Young children need meaningful learning opportunities to develop skills, competencies, a sense of self, and a foundation for learning throughout life. He was lacking in every aspect of these meaningful learning opportunities but his own conscience believes that indirectly he has learned from his childhood and schooling experiences. Hence he put in every effort to ensure his children achieve the basic elements of trust, motivation, and self-control needed for later intellectual and emotional

[15] Pseudonymn

development. In his teaching he aims to ensure his student teachers understand a solid foundation for teaching and learning art in addition to relating to others, and that his student teachers know what they can do to help their students develop.

Learning experiences in higher education

It was early in the morning. Everyone was still fast asleep. Hijas and his friend were preparing to travel up north to Penang which would take ten hours by car from his hometown in the southern part of Malaysia. Hijas made this trip from South to North almost every week. There was no federal highway at the time, just an old winding road. It was exhausting for both of them, having to travel such a long distance to study. But they knew it was the sacrifice they needed to make in order to improve themselves. Everybody dreamt of completing a university qualification as this would ensure them financial security, status, and a good future. There was no easy way to success. However, for Hijas, being a primary school teacher was not sufficient. He wanted to expand his professional horizons. He realised that having a teacher training certificate at a young age didn't help. Hijas knew that a good education was the 'passport' to a good fortune. Therefore he chose to further his study in 1975, after seven years of teaching service. As a person who was passionate about art, and who had been teaching art as his core subject, USM seemed to be the most suitable place to further his study in this area. Hijas felt that his art skills were mediocre and his knowledge about art needed improvement. He believed his knowledge of teaching art was far from adequate.

Hijas realised that while he was in the teacher's training college, he was exposed to the fine visual art teaching approach, and this had influenced his way of teaching art.

> When I was in the Specialist Teachers' Training Institute (STTI) in 1967-68, I learnt from prominent artists such as Syed Ahmad Jamal, Yeoh Jin Leng, Lee Joo Poh, and Grace Selvanayagam. Those were Malaysian artists. The trend was to teach Fine Art Education—master-apprentice approach...studio oriented. There was also the learning of Art History but purely based on the Fine Art notion of art history. So, when we graduated, we emphasised the training of skills. There were no elements of education. Even to teach art to children in primary schools, the approach was similar to teaching art to adults. I consider that as a gaffe which happened at the college level and a weakness.

He wondered if his teaching and learning of art education was appropriately implemented because to Hijas he has never learnt specifically about art education, rather he was trained as a professional artist.

> When I was at USM, I studied art history, art criticism, studio courses and other courses but not Art Education. Of course I mastered my studio skills but I consider that as an additional advantage to teaching. I keep on asking myself, "Are we actually learning about art or learning about teaching art? Did we acquire sufficient education while attending college?"

In 1978, upon graduation from the University Science of Malaysia (USM), he immediately applied to teach in a teacher's training college and was accepted to teach in Sultan Idris Teachers' Training College (SITC). Amazingly, he was the only visual art teacher educator teaching the art education program. When he was given the curriculum, most of the content was designed for Fine Arts studio courses such as Painting, Drawing, Sculpture, and traditional handicrafts such as Weaving and Basketry. In other words, art education was seen to be similar to fine art. The curriculum lacked elements of the history of art education, art education curriculum, or art education methodology, but included

psychology, sociology, and pedagogy. As a result, Hijas had to work hard to gather required information in order to teach. He went to a few libraries and stayed in there for long hours in order to design his own art education curriculum course.

Hijas wondered if he was teaching art the right way as he had obtained his teacher's training certificate and a degree in Fine Art that focused on art skills development. As a visual art teacher educator in a teachers' training college, he thought that he should focus on teacher preparation programs that emphasised the student's development as teacher, artist, researcher, and professional. Students were expected to develop both an artistic and teaching practice that connected conceptual understanding, critical reflection, and practical experience.

> "Am I doing this right?" The thoughts continued to arise. "I have never heard of any theories of art education prior to this. Neither art theorists such as Lowenfeld or Kellog." He kept on pondering.

In the following years, he enrolled for further study at the University of Malaya (UM). His main intention was to collect as much information regarding Art Education as possible. So he found books written by Herbert Read, Victor Lowenfeld, Kenneth Lansing, Laura Chapman and many more on Visual Art Education. He realised that there were other views of visual art teaching; that art education was not mainly product based. It was not all about skills and knowledge of art. It was also about personal development through art, that art could be a vehicle to achieve other purposes. According to Hijas,

> Art education is not all about doing art. It is more than that. It's also about reflecting on art; about how art can be used as an instrument for the betterment of the children. Not only can they learn about the specific content of art and the skills they develop through their learning, but also they learn about other

> things such as values, culture, entrepreneurship, and connoisseurship. Skills and knowledge of visual art is important. However, that shouldn't be the ultimate purpose of art education. In short it has multiple purposes.

When he was involved in the curriculum development for the Ministry of Education, Malaysia, he took along all the books pertaining to Art Education and used them as references. It was necessary for him to be prepared to convince the panels and justify his argument that in school, it was not a fine art approach that should be practiced but art education. He attempted to influence the panels (the art curriculum developers) to shift their view of Art Education from its traditional emphasis on studio art into a more comprehensive approach to art education.

> So, I thought I had fulfilled my dream and influenced the panels. The panel was composed of the following people: Yeoh Jin Leng, Yunus Mohamad, Sidek Baba, Baba Ahmad, Kak Ann, and Wahdi[16]. All of them were from USM and none had any Art Education background. So, the books helped.

As a result of the meeting, the art education in Malaysia has become more integrated and holistic. The Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE) approach has been acknowledged in the Malaysian art education curriculum with certain modifications that suited Malaysian National Education Policy. Hijas thought that the accepted art education curriculum could be a good mechanism for effecting social change.

[16] These individuals are leading artists and art education curriculum theorists in Malaysia.

Knowing Hijas

In March 2002 I was sitting anxiously outside the interview room at the Chancellery building waiting to be interviewed. There were four of us short listed for the position of lecturer and tutor in the Art department. All of us came from different art backgrounds—Landscape Design, Graphic Design, Multimedia Design, and Art Education. A fine looking middle aged gentleman ascended the staircase and walked towards us.

"Who's that?" I asked Amir, one of the interviewees who sat beside me.

"That's Hijas, the Dean," answered Amir confidently.

"Good morning," Hijas greeted us.

"Good morning," all of us replied instantly.

"Hmmm...what a humble person," I said to myself. I was impressed by his modesty. He made an attempt to greet us personally as he walked in the door. That was the first time I met him. I thought that were I successful in gaining this position at the university I would not have an issue working with him. A number of upper management people I have encountered have their own idiosyncrasies and are not easy to deal with. In my culture, it is not common for a person with a position to initiate the greeting. This is due to the revered value of respect for elders. Although I had not met him before, his modesty impressed me. This impression has been long lasting.

The first day I reported for work, I met him in his office. He was busy marking exam papers. He was not formally dressed as is expected in Malaysian culture. Normally a Dean would be wearing a necktie, coat, and black trousers. If I had not met him during the interview process, I might have thought he was a clerk. He was casual in both dress and manner. Hijas greeted me with a big smile and welcomed me to the university. His friendliness made me feel comfortable. Hijas outlined the culture of the university, the background of the courses that

I was to teach and provided me with some documents related to my teaching. He then instructed one of his subordinates to prepare the room beside his office for me.

We have worked together on many occasions. I was asked to help him mark some of his exam papers, and have also been included in his research group. I found it easy to work with him as he was very understanding and helpful. It seemed like we had known each other for a long time and his expectations of me were high. He even asked me to represent him in a seminar close to my hometown in which he was supposed to attend as the Dean of our faculty. His underlying reason was he wanted to give me a chance to attend a conference and go back home to meet my parents, an approach I deem as humanistic.

Later on I found out that he had defended me on many occasions. For example when the Chairperson of the Interview Committee was not keen to employ me, as one of the interviewers, he reasoned with her and managed to convince her of my capabilities. He has gained my respect and for this reason I am motivated to do my best.

Contributions

Hijas' contributions to the world of education in Malaysia and art education are numerous. His capacity for innovation was not an isolated characteristic, but part of a comprehensive and integrated approach to teacher professionalism. He was a critically reflective and effective manager which, in part, can be attributed to his expertise in change management. Hijas elaborates on his contributions,

> In terms of specialist contribution, from the year 1981, I was on the committee legislating the Art Education Subject

Syllabus for the teachers' training colleges organised by the Teachers' Education Division, and a committee member in the legislation of the BPG Art Education Question Paper. In 1987, I became one of the panellists in the KBSM Preparation in the Art Education Teachers' Guide Workshop organised by the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC), Ministry of Education Malaysia. When the Art Eduction KBSM was introduced in 1989, I became one of the panellists to evaluate the success of the implementation. I then was invited to become a speaker in the Art Education Resource Staff Course organised by CDC in the same year. From then on, every now and then I was invited either to become part of a committee or to become a speaker.

I was also the External Examiner for the Handicraft Training Centre from 1996 to 1999. In 1998 I was the consultant in the design of the UoEM logo, the design of the University of Education Malaysia cokmar (maze), the consultant on the design of the University of Education Malaysia traditional furniture and also the consultant in the design of the UoEM academic graduation robe.

Since I became the Dean in 1997, my contributions included establishing the Art and Music Faculty, developing the curriculum for the Art Education program, M. Ed program, Bachelor in Craft Design, Bachelor in Visual Arts Communicative, and Bachelor in Fine Arts (BFA). I've also provided my expertise to the UiTM (a higher education institute in Malaysia) and assisted in the preparation of the Visual Art Curriculum at the certificate and diploma levels for the Malaysian Handicraft Development Centre. I've also contributed in terms of consultation in the establishment of new courses at the diploma level for the Langkawi Crystal,

preparation of curriculum at the certificate and diploma levels for the State Education Department, preparing seasonal short term courses and annual trainings for the Art Education teachers for the Ministry of Education Curriculum Development Centre.

In 1999 I was invited as a panellist on the BICARA TV Education program with the theme 'It is Easy to Appreciate Art'. During the discussion, the panellists engaged in a discussion over the perceived biases of art, and ways to appreciate art.

His dedication was rewarded when he received an AMN award from the King of Malaysia in 1999 due to his contributions in education. He was also awarded the Excellence Service Award from the Ministry of Education, Malaysia in 1991 and received a Ministry of Education scholarship for the Masters Programme in Art Education at Ohio University, USA. These accolades encouraged him to work even harder.

All of the above makes him an influential figure in the decision making of art education programs in Malaysia. It allows him to speak about visual art teaching and how visual art teacher educators and art teachers can approach the teaching of art. He has therefore gained respect amongst other visual art teacher educators.

Beliefs and values

Hijas strongly believes that one's visual art teaching practice needs to be based on the context and setting of the teaching situation. Approaches to teaching art

in school settings differ from teaching art in higher education settings. In pre-K, primary school or high school the focus should be aligned to achieve the goals of the National Educational Policy. In higher education settings, there are differences that need to be understood by academics. According to Hijas,

> There are differences in the concept of visual art teaching. A university that focuses on entrepreneurship and development of human capital such as the University of Technology MARA (UiTM) will certainly approach their visual art teaching based on the university's vision and mission. Their students are expected to become artists or entrepreneurs. Therefore academics should teach within the expectations of the university, i.e., to produce artists and entrepreneurs. For a university that fully deals with training and educating teachers, the focus will not only be the development and enhancement of art skills and knowledge, but also to prepare them to be good teachers. The misconception that teaching art at the UoEM is similar to teaching art in other university settings is no doubt problematic. Teaching art in a master-apprenticeship approach will deter the achievement of the university's goal of producing skilful art teachers with a sound knowledge in art theory together with teaching competency. Having good knowledge and skills in art do not necessarily make a good art teacher.

He argues that art education differs from fine art education. In a higher education institution such as UoEM which focuses on teacher education, the focus is not to produce artists but to produce good art teachers with sound knowledge and skills in art and also the pedagogical content knowledge. Hijas argues that UoEM aims and purposes, contexts and modes of working, and ultimate commitment are different to other higher education institutions. The conceptual frameworks which inform the work of the professional artist and

the visual art teacher are different.

Hijas also believes in a distinctive approach in adult education called *andragogy*[17]. He believes that adults should acquire a mature understanding of themselves. They should understand their needs, motivations, interests, capacities, and goals. They should be able to look at themselves objectively and maturely. They should accept themselves and respect themselves for who they are, while striving earnestly to become better. The job of a visual art teacher educator is to facilitate their studies. Hijas rejects the older models of education that emphasise the transmission of knowledge from teachers to passive recipients.

The large amount of time spent by visual art teachers on preparation shows how greatly they rely on the transmission of skills and connoisseurship from master to apprentice. In this light a dedicated andragogy or other student-centred teacher will only succeed in their job if they accept that at least one thing students ought to know is how to inquire. That in turn requires them to impart and teach the techniques to foster inquiry in their classroom.

Hijas believes learning 'how to inquire' rather than learning what 'teachers think students ought to know' should be a central aim in the teaching and learning process. Therefore Hijas always makes sure that he plans activities that will provide opportunities for inquiry.

> I believe that we need to replace the approach (transmission of knowledge) with a problem-solving model of learning which involves cooperation between students and teachers and utilises the students' own experience as an educational resource. At some point in every lesson, students are arranged

[17] Andragogy is the process of engaging adult learners in the structure of the learning experience. The term was originally used by Alexander Kapp (a German educator) in 1833, and was developed into a theory of adult education by the American educator, Malcolm Knowles.

> into pairs, groups of three, or groups of four. The size of the cooperative teaching groups that I will be using varies. The discussion and discovery that occurs during cooperative learning is priceless. When students work together, they learn to communicate, they learn to compromise, work together on a common task, and explore others' ways of thinking. When students are explaining their reasoning to each other, they are reinforcing their knowledge.

The basis of this technique is that students develop a sense of responsibility for particular aspects of a project. Based on the time-frame given to them to prepare for the assignments given, and their group members, students have the opportunity to research, discuss, and explore the topic. This group technique requires all students to participate and supply ideas while giving every student the opportunity to be sure and understand what they do. It fosters communication, respect for each other, and new ways of thinking. Interestingly more often than not, their inquiries contribute to new knowledge and understanding and the opportunity to learn from each other. It also mirrors the real world.

To Hijas, students should be treated as autonomous individuals capable of assuming responsibility for their learning process within this co-operative model of learning. He believes that we should foster the capacities for critical thinking, problem solving, teamwork, and informed perception.

> It is no longer functional to define education as a process of transmitting what is known; it must now be defined as a lifelong process of discovering what is not known. What students should learn is not what teachers think they ought to know, but how to inquire. That is why traditional pedagogy is irrelevant to the modern needs of education. Therefore I believe a new educational ideal suited to our times is needed to equip people to inquire cooperatively into the changes

> provided by a more dynamic social environment, to produce new knowledge rather than just rely upon the knowledge inherited from the past.

In finding out about how art teachers understood art education, Hijas conducted a case study research project among the art teachers in primary schools in the district of Batang Padang, Perak. The research was to investigate the level of understanding of art teachers in applying the New Primary School Curriculum[18] better known as KBSR. The findings confirmed Hijas' perception that most of the art teachers in the primary school did not really understand the teaching and learning of art based on the KBSR Curriculum. Through his research Hijas noticed the misconception between art education and fine art education which is prevalent among Malaysian society. Many teachers approach their teaching and learning process based on the way they were taught which focused on product orientation.

Hijas believed that in order to rectify this misconception, in addition to educating his student teachers, he should also publish books and articles on art education. Although he was extremely busy with his job as Dean, he made time to write and published a few books and articles.

> I was actually too busy to write. There was too much administrative work. However, I need to write and I have to write. I should provide a good example as an academic. I still remember one of the professors in this faculty who said, "Publish or perish, or you're of no difference to the others". I

[18] The KBSR is to provide a child with a basic, comprehensive and balanced educational development at primary level. It emphasises the mastery of the skills of reading, writing and arithmetic. It is divided into two phases. Phase 1 refers to the first three years of schooling and emphasises the acquisition of basic skills. Phase II covers the next three years and focuses on the utilisation of the skills already acquired and the more explicit learning of knowledge. The planning of the KBSR is based on the principle of giving every pupil an equal opportunity in mastering skills, values, attitudes and practices.

> understood him well. Although that is not the only reason why I write, but that gave me the drive to write. I think through writing, we can get to our readers better and cover a larger audience than just our students. I thought to myself, well...this is one of the ways to rectify the misconception of people about art education. Therefore I try to devote some of my time to writing.

Hijas believes that teaching art to adults requires an understanding of not only subject matter and sound pedagogical skills but also the ability to understand the adults as a learner. He understands this very well for he had gone through the same process.

Hijas' art education teaching and learning history

He still remembers his worst experience when he was in secondary school. He admits that he did not know how to draw. But when he made mistakes, he was ridiculed by the art teacher, "You call this a painting?" The perception of visual art teaching was different then, and he says that,

> "We were all confused. We were never guided." So, now, upon reflection, I have come to the conclusion that this type of teacher lacked training.
>
> Of course, he was able to draw but never understood teaching methodologies. Why weren't we shown the process? I drew according to my own understanding. After my Lower Certificate of Education (LCE), I had nothing to do, so my father bought me drawing equipment and an Australian calendar with pictures of pine trees. I still remember... he

> asked me to draw. From there, I knew how to draw but they were awkward pictures. However I was able to copy well. Later, I managed to draw scenes with some perspective. My teacher didn't teach me. That was why, when I was reprimanded, I was hurt. I became lazy. I shied away. I felt disinterested in doing any art work. Because, we had been doing it over and over but it has never worked out. If our teachers were able to do it right, they certainly did not show us how. I think that this predicament still persists.

When he was in USM, he experienced learning from Malaysian artists and also a lecturer-artist from the United Kingdom. Their approach was to develop artistic skills and knowledge. It was no different when he did his teacher's training at SITC. He still remembers one of his lecturers in the college, Anton Lam[19], who was strict in his teaching and had no mercy on his students. Although at that time it was normal for a lecturer to behave in such a manner, in terms of a learning experience, it was awful.

Good visual art teaching

Hijas perceives good visual art teaching to be about engaging students. Good teaching takes the student somewhere; it moves them along a path. It has the same characteristic as the subject itself.

> I understood that art is a great subject. There is no time and space limit in the subject. Let's say we want to teach about paintings. We would go to the Stone Age or we can visit the Renaissance, or to the modern era and visit New York Art

[19] Pseudonym

> Gallery. Art has no boundaries. Everybody can go back and forth to any era, anywhere. We can do it virtually using interactive CD-ROMs, we can surf the internet, we can watch movies, and we can also go through slides.

Hijas believes that art teachers, including visual art teacher educators should know the content, context, and method of their teaching. As much as possible Hijas tries to teach the way he espouses how art should be taught. He believes that his role is significant because what his students learn from him will have long-lasting effects. His teaching practice in UoEM reflects his seriousness in implementing what he advocates.

> If you are teaching art, it means that you are practically teaching everything there is to know. You can relate art to society. You can use technology to convey messages. For example, we can use video and photos of the effects of the Tsunami to teach. We might include the theme of our teaching that relates to suffering, to receive sympathy and empathy. This is in line with John Dewey when he talks about art and experience. If all art teachers understood this, there should not be any problems in the teaching of art. It is a pity that this is not instilled and not fully understood. The focus is more on manipulating skills. Art Education as a subject is able to build a balanced human as suggested in the National Philosophy of Education but it is not being carried out as it is supposed to be.

To Hijas, the teaching preparation program should be designed to educate pre-service and in-service student teachers about teaching approaches and strategies, pedagogy, and methodology, in addition to content knowledge and skill development.

> Good visual art teaching has a close relationship with a

> quality preparation program for teachers of art. Student teachers need to be provided with knowledge, skills, and experiences in methods for curriculum, instruction, and assessment. When I was mocked by my art teacher for not being able to draw properly, it was perhaps due to the training that he had undergone, and his understandings of visual art teaching was such, that approaches to visual art teaching should be in the manner of a master-apprenticeship...and to achieve his goals, whether he realised it or not, he has humiliated his students.

Understandings of art education

After a few years in SITC, Hijas moved to teach in another teacher training college, which catered solely for primary school teachers. He wanted to work in a new environment although there was also the possibility that he wanted to be closer to his parents who needed his assistance.

He was disappointed in what he found at his new place of employment. Art Education in that teachers' training college was still understood as product-oriented and was seen as Fine Art education. The major aim of teaching visual art was to produce professional artworks. Hijas believed visual art education should be taught both as a body of knowledge and as a developmental activity.

> Children should be introduced to basic concepts in art and to methods of inquiry that would permit them to learn about the subject and about the world. Visual art teacher educators should be committed to art experiences as a means of nurturing personal maturity. The process of creating art and of responding to visual forms develops the child's identity and

openness to experience.

Hijas stresses,

> It is worth repeating that personal development through art is as important as learning about art. How do we develop creativity in children? Artistic development in children? That was not seen here. I saw that as a flaw in the Malaysian educational system.

He felt that he was not equipped with sufficient knowledge to deal effectively with the situation. Therefore, Hijas applied to pursue his Masters at Ohio State University. In Ohio, he learned that children should be learning in and through the arts in exciting ways—creating, interpreting, analysing and understanding. He cherished his experience of studying in one of the best universities in the field of Art Education. Over a year and a half, he learned a considerable amount and gained a great deal of experience. According to Hijas,

> We had discussions with the author of 'Art and Adolescence', Michael ... John A. Michael. I bought his book. My supervisor took me to Baltimore, Cincinnati. We went to every seminar organised by NAEA. After each seminar, we presented and came out with resolutions. It was very effective. Here, back home we have seminars, conventions but no impact. We submit suggestions, memorandums, but there are still no changes. That was the difference.

From Hijas' point of view, seminars, conventions, workshops, and conferences are not merely activities for gathering together all those involved in art education, nor functions to fill up the organisations' annual calendar. Rather it is a venue to generate better outcomes for the field of art education. He believes that there is still a lot of work to be done. In comparison to the conventions and seminars that he had attended in the US, the situation in

Malaysia is quite different.

> In the US for example, the Penn State Seminar generated several dozen research proposals. But sad to say, here (in Malaysia)...that does not happen. We're struggling. We don't have adequate funds for research, we don't have enough expertise, and worst of all, we don't seem to be able to find enough time to do research. Perhaps research is not our priority. In addition, the governing body of Art Education in the US is very strong and established. To name a few, there are the National Art Education Association (NAEA) and the Getty Centre which are well recognised internationally as opposed to the organisations in Malaysia. Therefore, it makes things easier to move ahead.

Hijas tries to reinforce the importance of conventions and seminars as a way to promote and increase awareness among visual art teacher educators of the importance of research. When he returned from Ohio, he was requested to teach at the Sultan Idris Teachers' Training Institute (SITC). He noticed that the understanding of visual art teacher educators about the teaching of art to the student teachers in his faculty had not changed and was still strongly influenced by the fine art approach. He does not deny that the enhancement of knowledge and skills in art is deemed as important but on the other hand the teaching should not focus too much on the production of work. There should be elements of pedagogy and methodology that will broaden the student teachers' teaching horizon. He does not agree that art should be solely taught as a master-apprentice approach but rather as a way to enhance skills and knowledge in the student teachers' preparation to teach in school.

Hijas believes that academics should understand the goals of the university and work towards achieving the goals. According to Hijas,

> I believe that the teaching of art shouldn't emphasise the

> master-apprenticeship approach. Although we need to have art teachers who are skilful and knowledgeable in art, we need them to understand how they should approach their teaching in a school setting. There is a difference between having skills and knowledge and imparting that knowledge. This is the task that visual art teacher educators should fulfil, that is to teach their students how to teach. This responsibility should be carried out by all the visual art teacher educators in this university. All visual art teacher educators should understand that this university is an educational university and the nature of this university is not similar to other universities. We're preparing student teachers to become teachers and therefore we need to equip them with the appropriate knowledge...knowledge in art, knowledge in teaching, skills in art and skills in teaching. There should be a balance between these two...the teaching of art and the art of teaching.

To give a better understanding of the aims of art education, the government, university, visual art teacher educators, student teachers, and society need to be well informed. Hijas believes that we need to contribute in whatever way possible to art education, particularly because its value is often underestimated. According to Hijas,

> The public should be more informed about art education. We, who are involved in art education, always claim that art education is an important subject that helps children to understand the world better and enhance their motor, creative, thinking, and manipulative skills. But how true is it? Have we been able to realise that? Thinking back about how much we have achieved these purposes scare me.

Therefore, as much as possible, he would work towards realising the purposes.

> I believe in a multiplication effect. If we are able to provide good visual art teaching in the higher education setting, when the visual art teacher educators go back to school, they would be able to teach art in the right manner. The children then will go back home and be able to inform their parents about how meaningful their art learning was. This is how we can inform the public and make them realise the importance of art education.

Hijas' vision seems too idealistic due to influences that have stemmed from within the visual art teacher educators which prevent them from shifting their beliefs and values. Unless proper steps are taken to inform and educate the academics, Hijas' vision will remain unnoticed.

Achieving goals in art education

Visual art teaching is considered to be of good quality if the teaching is able to achieve the goal according to the syllabus. This syllabus is developed based on the Malaysia National Philosophy of Education. As a curriculum developer Hijas is aware of the needs to prepare competent and caring visual art teachers who will serve secondary students. These visual art teachers are prepared to achieve specified learning outcomes such as demonstrating academic excellence, displaying enhanced visual art skills and knowledge, understanding and applying practical and pedagogical knowledge, and acting with social competence. Achieving these learning outcomes is his priority. To Hijas,

> Good visual art teaching means that I have achieved my goals in my teaching and the students have understood my teaching. What is my true goal? My specific goal is for my students to

> gain as much knowledge as possible in visual art teaching and relate their learning experiences to their teaching and lives. So, I'll try to properly plan my teaching. My broader goal is to arrive at the betterment of the society and the nation as a whole. I'll work towards achieving the goal. I don't use the same set of practices for every lesson. Instead, I constantly reflect about my work, observe whether students are learning or not, and, then adjust my teaching practice accordingly. I employ a variety of instructional approaches to achieve my teaching goals. Among the approaches are direct instruction [lecture method], indirect instruction, interactive instruction and experiential instruction.

Hijas recognises the limitation of every approach he uses especially the right approach for developing the abilities, processes, and attitudes required for critical thinking, and for interpersonal or group learning. To Hijas student understanding of affective and higher order thinking objectives may require the use of indirect instruction and experiential instruction where the role of the visual art teacher educator shifts from lecturer to that of facilitator, supporter, and resource person. The teacher arranges the learning environment, provides opportunity for student involvement, and, when appropriate, provides feedback to students.

Hijas is concerned with the enduring outcomes visual art teacher educators envision for visual art education. He challenges facile assumptions as to what constitutes good visual art teaching.

> I believe that art programs should deal with three overriding concerns: Developing the well-rounded child through art, promoting the knowledge and appreciation of art as a subject, and fostering the ability to relate art to daily living. Educators should foster personal fulfilment through art; appreciation of

artistic heritage and an awareness of the role of art in society.

Although it may seem theoretical, Hijas' beliefs beg for deeper thought of the direction of art education in the higher education setting in Malaysia.

Approaches to visual art teaching

Hijas believes that some visual art teacher educators teach without having explicit objectives which are understandable to the students.

> In Visual Art Education...how many people actually understand what provides the framework for the visual art education syllabus? How many?" Hijas asks me.

I chose not to answer his question. He then continued,

> "Most educators don't understand. In a study that we did, almost half the respondents don't understand the objectives and the goals in art education. What is to be achieved is not clear. They only know how to look at the topic. It is topic based. In truth, we want to see the educational process. That means everything was wrong. That was what I saw.

Hijas believes that the teaching of art needs to be purposeful.

> Teaching is more than an array of strategies and skills. It is the use of appropriate methods designed to encourage learning. Therefore, visual art teacher educators need to have the sense of purpose foremost in their mind as they construct their teachings. The purpose should be clear and it needs to be clearly articulated. And in the end, the purpose of teaching art should conform to the National Philosophy of Education

> (NPE). The philosophy envisages that education is an on-going effort towards further developing the potentials of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner. Education aims to produce individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, and physically balanced and harmonious, based on a firm belief in and a devotion to God. Such an effort is designed to produce Malaysian citizens who are knowledgeable and competent, who possess high moral standards and who are responsible and capable of achieving a high level of personal well-being.

In line with the NPE, Hijas feels that art education in Malaysia should therefore fulfil two main interests: those of the individuals and the nation at large.

> Besides social and economic mobility, the individual's interests also rest with developing independence and critical judgment to enable him or her to take control of their own life and to participate actively in improving their society as well as humanity as a whole. It is in a sense instilling positive values for good citizenship. The nation's interests, on the other hand, mean social, political and economic interests as envisaged by Rukunegara (the National Ideology). National integration and development to meet the manpower of a growing economy have been the overriding objectives of education; education has a crucial role to play in human resource development to meet the manpower needs of a growing economy.

Hijas believes that the intellectual, emotional, physical, and creative processes involved in producing art will help the child achieve an integrated, well-rounded personality. Through a deep understanding of how it should be taught,

the goals of NPE can be achieved.

Hijas is disappointed to see his students still in need of instructional learning as opposed to developing their own sense of learning. He believed that higher education students should engage in higher order thinking. Hijas' feelings of frustration and disappointment became more intense as he repeatedly realised that his efforts to bring some change did not seem to have any effect. Therefore, he tried to encourage the kind of thinking that requires students to integrate their skills to solve a complex problem through an active learning experience. He wanted his students to explore on their own the task provided to them.

> I realise that my students were always waiting to be spoon fed. At university level, this shouldn't be happening. They should be finding additional knowledge and information on their own. Therefore I would gear my teaching towards exploration of ideas and not allowing my students to be complacent.

During the observation, Hijas commented on his students' assignments. To Hijas most of the assignments did not achieve what he had expected from his students. I noticed some of his students were not comfortable with Hijas' comments. Some of the students were glancing at their classmates, I supposed their group mates; some were nodding with agreement on every comment made; some were busy talking to each other; and some were glancing at me. The class was quite noisy. It seemed that many of them misunderstood the task given to them. Perhaps they were not clear of the expectations or their level of knowledge was inadequate to perform the task.

However he doubts his approach was successful. From his comments, during my class observation, I could see that his students had not acquired the knowledge he had hoped for. It seemed like most students understood his teaching differently. Interestingly in the small group interviews, some of the

participants stated that they did not understand Hijas' teaching due to differences in the level of knowledge which made it difficult for them to consolidate the concepts he taught. However, some of the participants stated that they clearly understood his teaching. This caused me to reflect on the phenomenon I am examining in this study: Why is it in the same class, taught by the same person, the same classroom setting, some students clearly understood Hijas' teaching and some students did not? Is it the teaching? Is it the students? Is it the visual art teacher educator? The answer is not simple. I became more perplexed when Hijas mentioned that he received the score of more than 90% from the Student Evaluation of Teaching and Learning (Borang Penilaian Pelajar) conducted by the University. I thought that must be the case of disappropriation of the questions used in the Student Evaluation of Teaching and Learning (Borang Penilaian Pelajar). The questionnaires consist of only a few questions on teaching and learning, and the rest of the questions are related to the University's infrastructure and library. I believe Hijas' teaching approaches or the university's policy in relation to students' feedback need to be reconsidered. These questions are not easy to answer. There was also a possibility that the students' learning approaches are too complicated to understand based on one form of evaluation.

Art for everybody

To Hijas, art is meant for everyone. It is not meant specifically for talented students.

> We shouldn't discriminate against students. If art is meant only for them (the talented students), how about the rest of the students? Are we going to punish them for not being able to cope with our expectations? The visual art teacher educators should understand that human beings are born with different

> potential. That was why in my Curriculum class, I introduced students to the theory of Multiple Intelligences by Howard Gardner. I want them to realise that we have different intelligences. I also highlighted Laura Chapman's ideas of teaching art, of not only producing artists, but also connoisseurs. This is because, in general, visual art teacher educators have shown greater interest in students as creators of art than as appreciators of visual forms.

Hijas does not advocate any particular curricular approach to visual art education. He is quite sceptical of approaches to visual art education in which advocates become so convinced of a single way that visual art education becomes cloistered.

> Our approach to teaching art must not strictly adhere to a single way. The approach shouldn't be rigid. It's kind of situational. Different sets of students need different types of approaches. Even in the same setting, if I find out that my students fail to comprehend my teaching, I will change my approach. My approach is also based on the students' attitude to education.

To Hijas, visual art educators should be vigilant in keeping up with current developments in art education. The art education realm is not static. What is appropriate in the 1920s may not be applicable in the millennium era, and what is appropriate in one setting may not be suitable for another. Therefore it's imperative that visual art teacher educators equip themselves with a range of understandings of art education. Knowing different approaches to arts curriculum is valuable as each offers a different solution to the generative tensions of the field.

> That was why I introduced the studio-based and the discipline-based courses when I was Dean. They complement

> each other. I don't wish to argue for the superiority of one approach over the other. Rather, I advocate that if our vision is broad enough to appreciate the full array of practice in teaching the arts, we can achieve a better understanding of the distinctive learning opportunities each curriculum approach offers.

Hijas believes that visual art teaching in a higher education setting focuses on the development and enhancement of philosophical, theoretical, and practical aspects, as well as developing student's mental and creative growth, and should always adhere to the National Philosophy of Education.

Relationships

The relationship between visual art teacher educators and student teachers is also important to Hijas. To Hijas, teaching is also about establishing relationships. Without building relationship the purpose of teaching is diminished.

> If we would like to achieve good visual art teaching, one of the important things that we should consider is the teacher-student relationships: In this sense, once you've built a rapport with your students, part of your battle is won. They will tend to be closer to us and will not be afraid of approaching us on any matter...including personal matters. For me, the development of relationships is fundamental to teaching regardless of the age of the students.

With regard to his relationships with his colleagues, on certain occasions, Hijas seems to find himself in an awkward situation with a few of them. However it

does not affect his teaching.

> It's simply because of my position as the Dean and now as ex-Dean. I could see that they are not comfortable being my friend. I do not have any problems with them. Perhaps it was just my interpretation...it could be the other way round.

Hijas tries to establish rapport with his students. He knows that it requires hard work for him to know his students based on the fact that he has at least 90 students per class. During the observation, I noticed that he knew some of his students' names. When I conducted the interviews with him, occasionally some of his students knocked on his office door either to submit their assignments or to organise an appointment with him. I realised that outside the lecture he was more approachable with his students. He facilitated a friendly form of communication with them. He was quite informal and always reminded his students to see him if they had any difficulties with their studies. He would spend a specific number of hours in a week in which a student may discuss his/her problems. Hijas was aware that some students were uncomfortable asking questions about course work in class. He therefore employed a casual approach in which students could address their issues in a more relaxed way. Perhaps in the class, the nature of the course he was teaching and the number of students in his class prevents him from approaching his students in the same way he relates to students outside the class. I believe the limited response he received in his class was due to the level of difficulty Hijas introduced to his class and the difficulty his students faced to understand the subject itself.

Peer criticism

Hijas sees positive comments as constructive. Although he is open minded, he feels uncomfortable dealing with people, especially academics, who make

unconstructive comments about his teaching.

> I have problems with people who like to make destructive comments. I know it happens everywhere but we need to upgrade our thinking. We're in higher education, as academics, our thinking needs to reflect who we are. We must not mix professional and personal matters. As an administrator, I must work towards the betterment of the faculty, and the university at large. When I receive instruction from above, I'm obliged to implement it although it may not be favourable to all my staff. I believe any dissatisfaction needs to be rectified through the proper channels.
>
> In my teaching, I always invite any academics in the faculty to observe my teaching. If they feel like making a comment, they're most welcome. We should never deny the truth. If anyone was to criticise my teaching, please show me which part is the problem. If their teaching is better and they could provide me with necessary evidence that is more effective, I would be able to accept it. If it is true, we should not deny it. We should be positive about it.

To Hijas peer criticism is different to back-biting. According to him,

> With peer criticism, we know who we're dealing with. The person's words may hurt, but they will hurt less, I think, if we ask questions, decide which pieces we agree with and which ones we don't agree with. I watch people's self-esteem increase simply from becoming less defensive in the face of criticism and judgement. Besides, we may find a priceless gem in with some junk. But back-biting is unhealthy and doesn't benefit anyone.

Hijas regards peer criticism, when properly enacted, as a highly effective

means for encouraging collaborative learning and improving teaching practice. Carefully considered criticism gives a new perspective on the matters that are raised by our peers.

Importance of research

Hijas feels that in order to understand more about art education and the problems related to art education, he needs to research although he does not think of himself as a participant of the research community based on the limited time he had spent on research. His on/off relationship with research throughout his career was due to his work commitment as an administrator which required him to give more attention to administrative works.

> From my point of view, it's important to carry out research. It provides us with information that assists us in responding to other research findings and planning the way we teach. I refer to a lot of articles, journals and books in addition to the internet.

> When I was Dean, I didn't have enough time to do research. However, I felt a strong compelling need to do it. Not because it was the university's policy, but because of the benefits we could get from research. However I could not deny that there were other reasons why I did research, that I should show a good example to my academic staff. I believe I should lead by example. It's very shameful if I kept on motivating my academic staff to do research while I myself don't produce any. Somehow or rather, they would question me and what have I got to say about it? Busy? No time? No funding? Would they believe that?

Hijas understands that research is compulsory. It is clearly stipulated in the university's policy that every academic staff member has to conduct research. His role as Dean in the faculty involves ensuring that research is being conducted and he believes that everyone will benefit from it. He notices the lacklustre attitude towards research amongst his academic staff.

> I've been involved in the world of research from two different academic perspectives, in research policymaking and program delivery. As a former Chairman of the Faculty's Research Committee and the Higher Degree Research Committee, I realise that the understanding and awareness of the importance of research is very low, especially in my faculty. I realise that many of my academic staff do not have adequate knowledge and skills in research. It is probably due to their background as practitioners, such as musicians and artists. Therefore, I made arrangements with my research committee to hold a series of professional development workshops and seminars on research.

The results were overwhelming and many of the lecturers have begun to conduct research although it took them a while to complete their individual research projects.

Conclusion

Hijas is considered to have a very successful life as an educator and is now happily retired. He has contributed extensively to art education and continues to do so. His vision towards achieving greater recognition for art education is thwarted by public misconceptions of art; the battle is far from over for him. Hijas' perceptions of good visual art teaching in higher education go beyond

classroom practice. Hijas believes that there should be activities that integrate theory and practice, knowledge and skills so that they can be put into authentic learning situations. Hijas employs various instructional strategies to create learning environments and to specify the nature of the activity in which he and his students will be involved during the lesson. The approaches are referenced to the goals of education and apply to the objectives of the various curricula. In addition to the view that visual art teaching in higher education requires knowledge and skills in art, Hijas believes that practical pedagogical and andragogical knowledge and skills are equally important. All the knowledge and skills will be of no use if visual art teacher educators cannot use them effctively with their students. Whatever approach visual art teacher educators use, student learning outcomes should be the goal and visual art teacher educators need to understand the context and content of their teaching.

Chapter Six:
Osman the Adventurer

He tries to make everything as enjoyable as he can without losing the picture of the activity. His style's pretty good. He goes around and talks to everyone, he doesn't just single people out as his favourite, he goes around to everyone to see how everyone's going. If someone needs help personally he'll give it to them.

-Student Teacher

Formative experiences

Boom! Boom! The sound of bombs in the distance is enough to send chills through residents in the area at this ungodly hour of the night. Osman is awoken by his wife, concerned by the constant bombardment by Saddam's men in their new adopted country, Kuwait. But in fact, Osman is not asleep; he has too much on his mind to indulge in recreation as trivial as sleep.

Osman, his wife and one year old daughter arrived in Kuwait a year earlier, before the Gulf War started. He had set up a successful design practice with a young, wealthy Kuwaiti friend, Khalid Al Hamad who was a fellow student in the United States. Renting a luxurious apartment in the heart of Khaitan, just south of Kuwait City, life was a breeze. He could afford just about anything a

regular Kuwaiti could, which was plenty.

Now apart from regular calls to the Malaysian Embassy, enquiring and waiting for the right moment to evacuate, he was cut off from the rest of the world. After a month of being a refugee, he came out without physical wounds from the misadventure, but the experience has changed his outlook towards life forever.

He wonders whether the move from the States was a big mistake: "at least the biggest threat was from American arrogance and ethnocentricity," he thought. But Osman is not a person who looks back: he has ventured in four design firms, and seven educational institutions and universities in four countries (Kuwait, USA, New Zealand, and Malaysia) in his pursuit to better himself.

Adventurous life

Osman's life is a series of adventures, he loves taking risks. Given half a chance, he would change his course of life for the simplest of reasons. Perhaps that explains his unconventional and experimental approaches towards teaching and learning.

> Upon graduation from UiTM, I worked in a Design firm (Johan Design & Associates) for 4 years. I then decided to further my studies because I felt that as a designer I was beginning to plateau and was becoming complacent. I was accepted to study at CalArts (California Institute of the Arts). Upon graduation, I worked as a freelancer in the States for a year, before I was offered a position to establish a design firm in Kuwait. It was then that the Gulf War started; let us not go

there, it's probably irrelevant... Anyway, I came back home and worked as an Art Director, and later a freelancer.

Osman's ability to adapt and assimilate comes from his extensive travelling experience and contacts with different classes and ethnicities around the world. As such, he has developed an interpersonal skill that is rare amongst educators, an ability to address a class as individuals. Every student is treated individually. He looks into the uniqueness of each individual. He understands that each student has his or her own flair for design.

Upholding culture

It is 11:30 p.m. in the dorm of the California Institute of the Arts. The hallway is quiet except for the occasional laughter of students echoing from the lobby at the end of the hall. So, alone and getting ready for sleep, Osman lies in bed preparing for next morning's post grad seminar, a class that discusses everything from western aesthetics to philosophy. The class haunts him for he feels he lags behind his American and Canadian classmates. Usually he would have Charles Field over to discuss the given topic with him, or rather be tutored by him. Alas, Charles is unavailable that day. Osman dons a worn out T-shirt with his sarong, a traditional cotton chequered cloth tied around the waist to hold it together. Although Osman is in a foreign country, far away from his homeland, he holds his culture well.

Thirst prompts him out of bed to purchase a soda from the vending machine in the lobby. Wearily, he acknowledges some undergraduate students sitting on the couch in the lobby, as he feeds the machine. There is an uncomfortable silence, before one of them exclaims, "Osman! What are you doing in a skirt?"

Osman smiles, turns, and walks away sipping his soda without uttering a word.

Osman believes that every visual art teacher educator has a social obligation. His exposure and understanding of other cultures led to his desire to understand his own, a desire which he in turn advocates to his students. That is his commitment: to enhance his students' awareness of their own culture. He is very interested in bringing the Malay tradition to light by integrating it in his teaching. He wants to have cultural impact through his designs. With his focus on aesthetics, he clearly cares about its intangible impacts on culture.

> Our culture to a large extent has instilled in us a set of values, beliefs, and ways of thinking which differentiates us from others. To me, this 'weltanschauung' determines our work habits, values, communication styles and guides the way we see ourselves and relate with others.
>
> I am fortunate enough to get to deal with these sorts of things as part of my job, and the people I work with who do all the smart thinking about it, spending time designing for both the best experience and the widest adoption. I try to capture that in my teaching and take my journey with my students. My students not only learn about design but also about appreciating cultural values. I try to inculcate a strong sense of social obligations and sensibility in my students. They should be perceptive to cultural, social and environmental changes, and to do their part to advance the responsibilities of the profession. Designers should assist in altering society's perception of itself and help define the future, I try to remind students of their roots, and insist that experimental diversity should always reflect local views, colour and the sensitivity of each individual designer.

Unlike some countries where a single culture dominates the arts and music, the multi-ethnic Malaysia culture and its various expressions are diverse. As a graphic designer, Osman's objective is to produce work that reflects his own sense of cultural identity, influenced by his upbringing.

> My obsession with cultural identity led me to my 'Cultural Comments' series when I was studying in CalArts. I now contend that the Malaysian culture is eclectic and evolutionary. It cannot be fabricated.

Osman states that one of his teaching and learning strategies is to inculcate strong social obligations and sensibility in his students.

> Another strategy is related to hands-on experience such as giving them life projects, public service projects, educational visits, guest speakers and exposes them to past and contemporary designers.

Osman feels fortunate to be able to have both industry and educational experiences. The industry has provided him with hands-on professional experience and knowledge as to how to prepare the students for what is waiting out there.

> A lot of advertising and marketing principles are applicable to teaching. For example in advertising, you must always be conscious of your target audience and the strategy that is appropriate to the audience. In education we know that no student is alike in terms of behaviour, attitude, values, and the learning curve.

It is not strange to see Osman applying his experiences in advertising and marketing in his teaching. During my observation, I could see a glimpse of his flair. He tackled his students individually. He moved from one student to the

other and listened to their explanation about their artworks. Exchanging of ideas occurred and he tried to build on his students' interest. Even during the one-off interviews, most of the student teacher participants praised him for his teaching approach which was perceived to be very effective.

  

School days: "The worst among the best"

Life started early in Kampung Baru. At five in the morning Osman's mother routinely woke her seven children for school. His father's early demise put a strain on the family's economy. They all lived in a two-room apartment. Four boys shared a room, while the three girls and the mother utilised the other, so everyone had to find a comfortable spot to sleep. There was no room for beds in the little apartment. Everybody took turns for a bath because there was only one bathroom.

As Osman prepared for school, he dreaded the journey, where he had to walk for about two kilometres. But that was the least of his problems. The real test was facing the 'beast', his teacher Mr. Chok. Osman, although not a brilliant student, had somehow managed to put himself in the best class of the fourteen fourth grade classes in the school. Mr. Chok, notorious for his strict teaching methods, was put in charge of the top class to ensure all the students received straight A's in the exam orientated culture of Malaysian schools. He was given the mandate to do whatever was necessary to achieve the goal, and he used it unsparingly; this included physical abuse, insults and degrading punishment especially in the preparation for the fifth grade major government public examination.

Osman being the worst amongst the best was always at the bottom of the class. Although his grades were way above average, he always scored a B or B+ for

Mathematics, Science and Geography. That was enough for Mr. Chok to victimise him, caning, cursing and calling him names. Mr. Chok's action caused a rage in Osman. The behaviour was so humiliating.

Osman was devastated, but he bottled up his emotion. Revealing his predicament to his mother or his siblings was beyond him. Besides, it had come to a stage that he believed that was how education and teaching should be conducted. As he walked home from school, he felt a sense of relief that the day was over. He was temporarily spared from the ordeal. But tomorrow never failed to come.

Studying had never been easy for Osman. He was enrolled in a strict primary school where even the smallest of offences were dealt with in a draconian manner, from corporal punishment to degrading penalty. He had to endure years of agony in the primary school and had no fond memories of his early education. He was even reluctant to talk about it, and it was only after some persuasion from me that he decided to open up. Osman was brought up in a typical traditional Malay family where you are conditioned never to show disrespect or question your elders. In his culture, the teacher holds a pivotal role in society. Teachers are never wrong. Any complaints made about the teachers will backfire and the students who complain will always be seen to be at fault in the eyes of their parents. Physical abuse by teachers was common then. Osman could not accept that,

> I realise that physical abuse such as corporal punishment in school caused more fear than respect. Although the fear of physical punishment has often lead to maintaining control of the classroom, there is a danger in mislabelling fear as respect. To use an analogy, consider what would happen if a bottle of petrol was mislabelled as cordial?

That physical abuse really frustrated him. The only outlet for his frustration was his passion for art, particularly drawing.

> I was brought up in a culture where restraint is a virtue. To pacify my urges to express, I would do drawings of mainly superheroes and martial artistes. After high school I knew that I was destined for design school.

Hatred for school

All the years of ordeal changed Osman for the worse. He became a rebel in secondary school and became involved in substance abuse and joined bad company. It all began with a series of unwarranted punishments for the most trifling offences by the school administration, but the last straw was having his hair cropped in front of the class by the discipline teacher, Mrs. Zainab. Because the length of his hair exceeded the collar of his shirt, he had to rectify it by trimming his hair really short, a length that was not at all fashionable in the 70s.

Osman found it degrading and humiliating especially as he had a crush on one of the girls in his class. In turn, he found it more difficult to get out of bed to go to school everyday. Osman lost faith in the educational system. So one morning, instead of books, he filled his school bag with a t-shirt and jeans and joined the bad boys; he started smoking and experimenting with *weed*. For the first time Osman experienced a sense of freedom, and felt that he was in charge of his destiny. The false sense of security led him to more potent drugs. He became an angry young man, his siblings noticed the change. Life was extremely difficult and he felt isolated. Although it was fun for a while, his conscience got the better of him. While intoxicated, he began to think of his

mother's struggle and wept uncontrollably.

Later he resorted to the only teacher he trusted, Mrs. Arbahyah, who apart from being his teacher, was his counsellor and his confidante. Osman held her in high regard, and with her guidance was able to get his life back on track. All through the calamity of secondary school, he was able to maintain a decent grade, thanks to this teacher. He summarises her guidance as follows: A teacher can change the course of your life, if only they have the realisation of how much impact they have on their students.

His bad experiences during his school years made him vow that if he ever became a teacher, he would not subject his students to the misery and degradation he had endured. He would treat his students with respect and dignity.

Learning experiences in higher education

Osman had high expectations when he was accepted to join an art institution, but again he was disillusioned by the system. Even through college he was critical about the teaching approach of the academicians there.

> As thankful as I am to the lecturers that had taught me and made me who I am, I can't help but feel cheated by the shallow and almost indifferent approach towards education by some of the faculty members while pursuing my degree here in Malaysia. I would rather not mention names, but there were and still are some so-called academicians, now holding a high ranking position in education, who did not provide any assistance, came to class, assigned us a design project that

> was due in a week, and then denounced us for our inability to produce exceptional work. This draconian approach had resulted in many casualties in the dismissal of students, which included many good students and a very good friend of mine. I hold no grudge against them but accept it as a lesson to constantly assess myself as an educator.

To Osman he was not a gifted and brilliant student, but his desire to learn made up for his shortcomings.

> When I enrolled as a graduate student in the States in 1986, I spent the most part of the first semester in a state of confusion. It was a trying moment; everything was so alien to me. I could have been on another planet as far as design education is concerned. Hahahaha.... I felt so lost, so ignorant.... I was never exposed to the evolution or philosophy of design. Semiology, Post-structuralism, and Deconstruction was never in my vocabulary, nor was Barthes, Derrida or Strauss. While the other students were absorbing knowledge with ease, I spent many sleepless nights trying to make some sense of what the professor was talking about. I had to work twice as hard in catching up with reading and 'interrogating' other students into revealing the secrets that only I did not seem to share. Fortunately, most were very accommodating. Charles Field for one had been my guide, my sherpa.

Reflecting on how he moved into the world of teaching, Osman recalls,

> I was a practising designer and working for a prestigious agency for 11 years. Teaching was never my ambition. However, business wasn't too good then. I stumbled upon

> teaching during a part-time contract and found it fulfilling and gratifying. It was my friend, Ken, who taught in a private college who invited me to join him as a part-time lecturer. When he extended me the offer, I didn't think twice. It was scary in the beginning, I had no qualms about teaching, I had enough experience presenting design work to the corporate community, but the thought of misguiding the students was more of a concern to me. Sitting in Ken's class was my way of benchmarking and learning the art of teaching.

But his passion for art, his curiosity, a desire to share his experiences and knowledge, surmounted his quandary. Since he had been trained as a practitioner, when he started teaching, he had to relearn everything from scratch as he realised that teaching was altogether a different ball game.

> So I have to do a lot of reading, going through articles and journals, surfing the internet, and anything I can get my hands on. My other efforts included collaborating in doing research with more experienced visual art educators, attending workshops, seminars and conferences, engaging in variety of experimental approaches in teaching, attending professional development, and of course self-reflection.

His awkward entry in terms of age and specialisation to the educational field forced him to reverse the learning process, instead of learning educational theory first, he experimented with teaching techniques and later found out about the theory behind the application, through reading and other media.

> I am particularly impressed with John Dewey's philosophical pragmatism, concerning interaction, reflection and experience, and the work of his successors such as Knowles, Kolb, Lindeman and Rogers. After digesting the theoretical

aspects, I applied some of their principles in my teaching.

After being a full time educator in UiTM, he found the environment and the staff to be less than stimulating; so he decided to start afresh.

> Teaching just grew in me. I later took up another part-time teaching contract in my old art institution (UiTM). It didn't take long before I was offered a full time position. I had to work together with my ex-lecturers as peers. I wasn't comfortable as I can't stand the attitude of some of the lecturers that had taught me. I guess the feeling was mutual. Hahahaha...So when I heard rumours that the institution was planning to set up a design school in a branch campus in Melaka, I went to see the Dean and volunteered myself to be transferred. The rumours turned out to be true, and after some negotiations and preparation, Shariff Mustapha (a senior lecturer) and I were posted to Melaka.

To Osman, teaching in the branch campus was a wonderful experience. He gained a lot of experience when establishing a new department from scratch.

> Shariff and I got on and worked really well together. In the following months, more staff joined us. After about a year, Shariff was called back to the main campus as Associate Dean of the Faculty of Art & Design. I succeeded him as the head of department in Melaka. Everything was well and dandy, until I was offered a teaching position at a new university (Multimedia University) in Melaka in 1996.

Although Osman was happy in UiTM, the offer to teach at the Multimedia University was too attractive to ignore in terms of remuneration and the freedom as both academician and researcher. He loves challenges and he felt

the opportunity should not be disregarded. As nonchalant as he may seem, he was focused and would not let insignificant elements get in his way, even at the cost of a prestigious and cosy position in the profession. He recalls,

> I was assigned as the head of the advertising department in the Faculty of Creative Multimedia, at the Multimedia University. A year later I was promoted to Associate Dean. I was happy for a while, winning lucrative grants for research, having the opportunity to do strategic planning for the faculty, and making decisions. As the faculty grew, the situation changed. Everybody was trying to climb the corporate ladder using any means possible, including backstabbing, badmouthing and sabotage.

Osman was not in the mood to compromise his integrity and play the game. Besides, he feels that the stakes were low and therefore he decided to withdraw gracefully.

The new adventure begins

Life must go on. Using his experience in teaching, Osman then decided to begin a new adventure, teaching overseas. Osman says,

> I applied to all the art institutions in New Zealand. Why? Because I've always had a soft spot for New Zealand. Massey University responded, and after a telephone interview and some paperwork I was working as a lecturer in Wellington in 1997. New Zealand was everything I imagined it to be and more, the scenery was breathtaking, and the people were

> hauntingly friendly, a far cry from my days in the States or Kuwait.

To Osman everything was perfect, the university, and the town, everything except the cost of living. The expense of raising four children and a wife who was not working was exorbitant. He had to return home after a year. With his experience, it didn't take long for him to secure another job.

> After two months I was offered a teaching position in a broadcasting school (TV3 Academy). I was assigned to establish a Multimedia Department that integrated broadcasting into the curriculum. I had a good time in the college, learning new trades and meeting people in the industry again.

However, he did not last in the academy. He yearned for more. In the academy, there was no allocation for research, presentation of papers in seminars or to further his education. After four years, he was ready for a change again.

> In June 2002, I joined the UoEM where I established four courses in the new department of Visual Communication. I am still here today. I still practice design but have the option of satisfying every designer's dream of choosing projects that suit me.

Osman views his career as a work in progress, both as a designer and a visual art educator. He feels he must be open to new design concepts, influences, morality and technology. It is akin to a long journey without a specific destination. Graphic Design to him has evolved and revolved dramatically since he started his career. Design today can be style and anti-style, aesthetic and anti-aesthetic, communication and anti-communication.

Lifelong learning

To Osman teaching provides him with an avenue to continue to learn—lifelong learning. He has never stopped learning. To improve his teaching, he resorted to a few strategies deemed to him to be important.

> Maintaining a record of change is crucial...resulting from self-evaluation. Since I don't have any teaching qualifications, I suppose this record helps me to check on my teaching. I also read journals, books, articles related to teaching; reviewing new teaching materials, exchanging course materials with colleagues from other institutions; involving myself in associations and societies concerned with the improvement of teaching and learning; attempting instructional innovations and evaluating their effectiveness; participating in seminars, workshops, and professional meetings; participating in course and curriculum development; pursuing a line of research that contributes directly to my field of studies; preparing textbook/manual/monograph or other instructional materials; and editing or contributing to professional journals on teaching.

He also believes in peer learning, a form of cooperative learning that enhances the value of teacher-teacher interaction and results in various advantageous learning outcomes.

> I believe in being open, I invite my friends to sit in my class, and sometimes I sit in theirs. There's so much to learn this

> way. I've also been invited by friends to be an external examiner for a number of universities and colleges where they teach, and I find it very helpful for me. I hope it does the same for my colleagues. It really helps... like in a game of chess, you are more likely to see more strategic moves when you are the audience. I am open to criticism and advice... I want to learn. I believe we should cultivate learning communities among visual art teacher educators.

And the most rewarding aspect of teaching design was seeing his students enjoy his teaching and succeed in their profession.

> I constantly have ex-students stop me in the streets, thanking me for teaching them and telling me that they are holding an important position in a corporation. Some have their own companies. That would be the top of my list. All in all, it has been rewarding, there are many opportunities for self development through formal and informal education, opportunities to travel and for public recognition. An example of this recognition is being let off with a traffic offence because the traffic officer will not issue a summons when they know you are a lecturer. Hahaha...

Challenges

However, there are also some challenging aspects that Osman had to deal with. The most challenging aspect would be the misconception of art amongst public administrators as well as the general public. According to Osman,

> In this part of the world, art is perceived as a recreational subject, a hobby, a pastime, seldom as a serious profession. This in turn leads to smaller allocations for art departments, as it is not the preferred field amongst the parents. Art schools usually end up with a smaller budget in comparison with other schools. As a result, visual art educators will have to contend with smaller budgets and lesser quality students.

Osman realises that teaching art in a higher education setting is not a straight forward process. There is a dichotomy between two opposing tensions. On one end are the skills, pragmatism, and vocational training that will be useful for student teachers when they teach in school. On the other end are scholarship, intellectual exploration, divergence, liberal arts, and research. Osman stands in the middle of these tensions. He considers both aspects as important and he tries to accommodate both aspects by designing his teaching towards the realisation of both elements.

Good visual art teaching

Osman believes that good visual art teaching should be approached in many ways. Teaching of skills and knowledge of art is only a fragment of the big picture of visual art teaching. It is not the ultimate goal but part of the consolidation of practical art that benefits human beings.

> I understand that art shouldn't be taught purely as a vocational subject, where only skills in drawing or design are emphasised. It is unfortunate if students are not exposed to the philosophy of art, creating beauty with purpose, making the

> world a better place to live in, understanding other cultures, respecting nature and its inhabitants, and understanding the obligations art makers have in communicating a positive message to society. The broad-based understanding helps me in making sense of what art is to my students. I had the privilege of learning from the best and the worst. Good teaching in art involves the capacity to transcend material and skill, the sensitivity to analyse and synthesise the discourse.

In his teaching, Osman is concerned with an end result that is functional without neglecting the importance of process. He was aware that the student teachers should be able to see beyond what is obvious, beyond the surface, the repercussions, implications and reactions. To Osman it is important knowledge acquired should be applied, and once applied, is subject to reflection. We should reflect on the impact of objects and visual messages. Osman states,

> Good visual art teaching consists of a good understanding of both content and pedagogy by the teacher. It involves three steps, i.e. knowledge, application and reflection. The ability to proliferate intelligent students also requires communication skill and conceptualizing skill of their work to be developed among the students.

To Osman, good visual art teaching constitutes a sense of purpose and a thorough understanding of the problems and requirements needed. In order to achieve that, communication is vital on the part of the visual art teacher educator. The strategy employed should differ considerably from a more scientific and objective subject.

> It's neither having grandiose infrastructure and facilities, nor producing masterpieces of artworks but art education should be used as a vehicle to mould young people into complete and

> wholesome human beings sensitive to social, moral and environmental obligations.

Osman regards himself as a coach, facilitator, and a friend. He makes known to his students that they will not be spoon-fed. Hence, he will not be the only source of information.

> Students are encouraged to look for additional information on their own. They are encouraged to make their own decisions and rationalisations. Then they will learn to think analytically and critically in the process of developing the creative ideas. They are to be responsible and accountable for their actions. I allow them to explore and play, experiment and express themselves and be themselves. But I am strict when work and datelines are concerned. I want to strike a balance in the classroom atmosphere so that the students know when it comes to work, I mean business.
>
> I assist the students with the necessary information to start their assignments. They have to do their research report before doing the *scamps*, thumbnail or rough before going on to semi-comprehensive visuals.

These statements are supported by his students:

> Sherry: He doesn't generally spend a lot of time giving information. He probes us and made us think and reflect on ourselves.
>
> Naga: He gives us a little bit of information and then lets us think on our own instead of telling us everything. He helps us and gives us a bit of encouragement.

> Niza: He's very approachable. In fact he always invites us to eat out or to go to his home to do our work. So, his bonding to students is very close. He never feels awkward going to his male students' homes and dining together with them which is seldom done by other lecturers. But when he's serious, all of his students dare not play a fool especially when it comes to the quality of artwork and the submission date line. He's very particular and strict about that. However he has never raised his voice let alone curses. For example, if a student doesn't do their job for a presentation and during the presentation he or she can't really perform, Osman will ask the student to go to the front and do the presentation based on the allocated time...let's say 10 minutes. The student has to make use the full of ten minutes to present what he "doesn't do". Osman once paid a "friendly" visit to his student's home that was late from class which was coincidently close to the studio building in which he was teaching, and called the student. From then on, nobody dares not to attend class or come late to class.

To avoid his students from being bored, Osman will approach his teaching in many different ways. His goal is to stimulate students to learn with passion rather than by rote.

> I believe in exposing my students to different approaches in art. My class would usually be very visual, a presentation of images and artwork. I encourage them to stop me to ask questions or express their ideas and opinions during the presentation. I create an avenue for the students to express themselves without risks or judgements. I sometimes play the devil's advocate to their answers to encourage more responses, and if that did not work I would single out a

> student, usually not individually but in a smaller group, for example. "I would like some comments from the ladies or from the students in the back row, or from the Geography Majors". Then only the cheeky ones would have their names called out.

In addition to inspire his students, one student, Niza, states,

> Another thing that inspires students to strive to do their best is that he isn't stingy with his knowledge. His experiences while he was working overseas and while he was working in the industry (advertising) make us excited about learning. So, the students feel interested because they can see with their own eyes that a Malay can be successful in a very challenging field, locally or internationally.

Osman believes that it is important for students to be allowed to develop self-trust and self-confidence. Therefore, his teaching has been geared to grow and develop confidence.

> My teaching is focused on self-direction and self-motivation of the students. I hope to develop a deep understanding of oneself and the way one learns. It's very empowering. I never wish to see my students approaching me not knowing what to do and expect me to show them what to do and then imitate my work. I do not wish to apply the master teacher approach...the anachronistic concept.

As much as possible, Osman is interested in developing a positive attitude among the students. To him making a mistake is part of the learning process and to learn from mistakes is a virtue.

> I will ensure that all students' work is shown to me before

> they proceed to the final step. I find that by doing so, the students are more aware of their own creativity and should there be any mistakes, there is room for improvement and rectification before they proceed to the final submission.

Students are required to present their work in front of the class; works are displayed and each member will have to explain their work and obtain feedback from the floor. Should there be any queries, they will have to defend to their best ability or accept it as positive criticism and improve on it.

To make students' learning more effective, Osman will provide one to one consultation about the projects assigned to them. This will enable him to cater for the specific needs of each student, even to the extent of working with the student to devise individual courses of study which Osman and the student then constantly monitor and modify. He would encourage others to listen in, as the problems were usually similar. Earlier on, the students would have to present their work which will be projected for the class to make comments on or propose ideas for improvement.

> I try not to be dogmatic and would expand on the ideas that they have brought up. I view myself as a facilitator rather than a teacher. I show the students no formulae rather, guidelines; I encourage idiosyncrasies and proscribe styles; and I shun trends but promote what is contemporary. The class would then end with the students having been given the chance to express any problems or grievances and they would be reminded of datelines and assignments they need to do the following week.

By understanding this philosophy, it allows students to explore their potential to the fullest extent. In the context of his lecture, Osman focuses on his

students' understanding.

> Graphic design is a mix of technical and creative work. My students have to understand that. It's not a matter of just giving my students the rules to remember, but I believe we've got to go beyond that. I know that most of what students learn during their course will be obsolete by the time they graduate. So there's no point in having them memorise a whole system of rules.
>
> We can't get too theoretical because they have to understand the creative aspect. Therefore at the beginning of every semester, I try to make them aware that nothing is black and white. I want them to realise that there's no right way of doing graphics. My objective is to consider the range of options and to select the one which they consider the most appropriate and then critically evaluate the choice.

In order to teach effectively, Osman believes that knowledge, skills and the ability to teach comes with the territory and all these are fundamental in the context of art teacher education. We are looking at education in a more challenging world.

Profiling

In terms of managing his teaching and learning, Osman states,

> It is a little bit of everything, quality control, management but most of all I believe profiling...students have different

learning curves.

Osman believes that there are "ponies and thoroughbreds in all classes," and that, "You have to profile and see what triggers each individual student."

> The aim of profiling is to provide my students with a career-long procedure whereby students develop and maintain a documentary record of their learning experiences. Correctly implemented, profiling should form the core of each student's management of their own learning. I see profiling as a way of improving students' ability to take responsibility for their own learning, and of marshalling a portfolio of documented experience that students can refer to after completing their studies. It's also a good way to monitor my student's progress. The end result of this project will be a 'portfolio', comprising of all the documentation and artworks of the student for the entire length of the coursework.

According to Osman,

> I profile my students based on four categories: creative students who are compelled to excel, creative students who lack drive or are complacent, less creative students who desire to be good, and less creative students who just feel they do not belong in the creative environment. In short, all the students require some form of motivation, persuasion, confidence building, and a sense of purpose.

To Osman, the art students have a gift, the ability to think beyond, to transcend logical thinking. They have the tools and avenues to express themselves through various approaches and mediums. The also have the ability to make significant global changes physically and mentally.

> Throughout history, we see that civilisation was governed by literates; information is power. Looking ahead, I believe the world will be inherited by visual literates and therefore, art education plays an important role in achieving a more holistic goal.

To Osman, the first thing the students should have is appreciation, followed by understanding, skills and finally the ability to communicate. He thinks it should be in that order. In order to bring about the best in the students, we must engage them in topics that are dear to them, something they can relate to. Most of the projects he assigned to them are contextual, about themselves, their family and experience. If it had to be industrial, he would involve them with 'live' projects, where they had to conduct research and acquire knowledge from their 'client'.

Problem-based learning

Osman's teaching strategy varies. It is very context dependent. He does not believe in a single approach that suits everybody. He is fond of problem-based learning.

> I think we should stimulate their minds, enthuse them, and send them on the quest for learning. We should send them off on a voyage of discovery to broaden their knowledge and open new doors. One of my approaches was to create problem-based learning. During the problem-solving process there is an analysis component in each step, evident in defining the design problem, researching the topic, brainstorming and trying various options, and constructing a

> refined solution. There also exists the analysis to better understand how and why design decisions are made.
>
> It was quite taxing for the students but it pays off. The easiest example that I can cite was the assignment that I gave to my first year students. I asked them to design a logo or symbol that represents them. It looks easy but most of my students find difficulty in coming up with one representation. It's like they don't know who they are. That's the problem that should be solved. However, once they got over it, they got excited.

Osman employs various strategies in conducting problem-based learning.

> Apart from the normal chalk and talk approach, creating an issue or problem for the students to solve by themselves, which includes case study, small group discussions and then opening it up for the class are the strategies that I normally use in my classes.

Osman believes that individual projects and group projects are complementary.

> Individual projects help the student to work on his or her own, exploring, researching, and overcoming problems on their own. To me group projects enable my students to overcome some of the concerns they may have about getting out into the wider community and interviewing people. It is a daunting process for the students, especially the pre-service student teachers. When the students work together in a group, at least they will be able to provide each other with mutual support.

These cooperative and collaborative learning experiences to Osman are deemed as important to the students' teaching preparation.

> I think it will improve my students' negotiating skills. They will be able to discuss their project and talk about the general principles, aim of the project, basic elements and principles, contribute different views on the same point, and try to reconcile different perspectives.

According to Osman, his students' learning outcomes would most certainly reflect his teaching,

> There are no bad students, just bad teachers. But of course there are always exceptions to all rules. The students would have to want to better themselves, posses the correct attitude and a desire to learn as a pre-requisite.

Building relationships

A typical day at "Academia Land", Advertising Design class begins at 8.30 am on Wednesdays. Osman steps into class, and the students are aware of his entrance. Some cheeky students do a countdown as he enters. Osman does not care; he believes that the students are entitled to have some fun, even at his expense. Usually he would have a smile on his face as he enters, but this particular day is an exception. He scans the whole class, and notices a student munching some snacks. With a straight face he announces, "I do not tolerate eating in my class ...." He pauses, and the class becomes subdued, baffled by the uncharacteristic mood swing. Then Osman continues, "Unless you are willing to share them with your lecturer." He then goes to the student and grabs a handful of potato chips and munches away. The class roars with laughter.

The class goes on without a hitch, but as Osman is explaining a concept while writing on the whiteboard, a student walks in. It is no secret that this particular student is notorious for not being punctual. Osman turns around and offers the whiteboard marker he is holding to the student, as if offering the student to take over the class. Baffled by the gesture, the student raises his eye brow, hoping for some clarification.

"In the planet where I come from, it is usually the lecturer who would come in last," he castigates the student. The rest of the class are not sure how to react, but there is some giggling from the back of the class. Osman tells the student to take a seat and continues teaching. As he is lecturing and walks past the student, he gives a friendly pat on the student's back, signalling that no offence has been taken or was intended by the previous episode. The student is never late again. To Osman he tries to avoid fear in his students.

  

Caring

Osman cares about his students. He believes that good visual art teacher educators care passionately about both their subject and their students. It's not enough to have only one component while neglecting the other. Although being passionate about our subject has a certain impact on our students, Osman does not consider that this is the totality of what a visual art teacher educator embodies. He adds,

> Caring doesn't mean that you have to love all your students. My way of showing my love to my students is to sit in the office and briefly go through the syllabus for the day, improvise the lesson for the day by adding or omitting

> information from the plan. I like to constantly recreate my lesson plan because I get bored easily with routine. If I feel bored, it will certainly affect my students. Then I would think of ways to make a grand entrance to the class, sometimes with a prank, a joke or a riddle. I'd like to think that the students looked forward to it. It is my way of getting their attention, as I know they usually have back-to-back lectures.

Osman also establishes good rapport with his friends and colleagues. He believes that they need each other. We can never live without other people. Exchanging ideas while having a cup of coffee helps to expand our horizons. Therefore Osman says,

> My day will always start with breakfast with a friend in a different venue everyday, a friend that I'm comfortable and familiar with. It could be anybody regardless of who they are.

He is not choosy in finding a companion. Therefore it is not strange to see Osman has a lot of friends and he mixes around very well. He is an egalitarian. His students cherish the way Osman relates to them. It influences their motivation and interest towards the subject taught by Osman.

Joy and excitement

Osman feels that one of the greatest skills an educator should possess is the skill to inspire students, to motivate them, and to get them excited. To him a visual art teacher educator needs to be creative in teaching and that is why teaching is considered as an art. One of the ways is to instil in his students a sense of curiosity, an enthusiasm and an enjoyment for learning. He hopes that

his students will do the same thing when they go to school to teach. A Deweyian at heart, Osman states,

> I hope they can inculcate a sense of joy and excitement in their students, and make them conscious and critical of art around them. As not all their students will be artists, at least they can help in creating aesthetically conscious engineers, accountants, doctors, and administrators.

Osman believes that good teaching means making the subject interesting for the students.

> And I try to make the class interesting, and without unnecessary pressure, crack jokes and at the same time convey the knowledge that they should master, by which I hope the joy of teaching and learning will rub off on the students. When I acquire new information and knowledge, I would reflect, whether I have practiced it or whether it is applicable to my teaching, sometimes even experimenting with it in my class.

Osman prefers to look at the lighter side of academic or disciplinary problems, and tries to remedy these with wit and humour. His aim is to ensure students learn in an atmosphere that is fun. In addition motivation is important for his students.

> In conducting a class for example, apart from disseminating knowledge, I feel that giving them a sense of purpose and a bit of entertainment in the process is just as important. And advertising has all the ingredients required to be able to achieve these aims. At this level, learning should be fun above anything else, followed by building and maintaining

> confidence in the ability of the students. I hope this will be able to motivate them.

His students clearly like Osman's approach. They view favourably his attempts to make his class enjoyable and fun. They allude to his active and dramatic approach, and acknowledge his sense of humour. The democratic practices he endeavours to employ in an effort to tap into the interests of the students are also acknowledged.

> Nizam: He tries to make everything as enjoyable as he can without losing the picture of the activity. His style's pretty good. He goes around and talks to everyone, he doesn't just single people out as his favourite, he goes around to everyone to see how everyone's going. If someone needs help personally he'll give it to them.
>
> Naga: He's laughing and joking and stuff.
>
> Nisa: He tries to make it fun. We don't feel the pressure.
>
> Sherry: He tries to make our learning enjoyable like what we want to do, and what we like and know best.
>
> Shahril: His class is fun. He tries to do things that we like, or that he thinks we might like.

The students also noticed that Osman enjoyed teaching Graphic Design, and that his enjoyment was evident in his teaching practice. Fazil suggested that, "he's pretty enthusiastic about his teaching."

Osman's approach to his teaching had a positive impact upon them and their willingness to participate and engage in the subject. As Nisa suggested, "If the teacher's interested, the students are going to be interested and if you enjoy it

you listen more, you don't mess around."

There are instances when he would play soft classical music as he teaches and sometimes the class would commence in the cafeteria or at the gazebo by the river. The element of surprise is something he picked up from his many years in advertising. The students love his style. Although the administrators find his unorthodox approach questionable, it has never become an issue.

Caring father

Osman takes the day off one Thursday. He has just come back from a two day seminar in the north of the country. As usual, his wife would be the first to be up in preparing their five children for school. Knowing that Osman needs a rest, she decides to let him sleep on. As they are having breakfast, Osman gets up and announces, "Nobody goes to school today, big daddy's got other plans for all of you." The younger ones are all too happy to skip school, but the elder daughter and son are somewhat reluctant. Osman respects their decision and lets them decide, but after a brief discussion between them, they relent. So off they go in the van, not knowing the destination. The children enquire, but Osman smiles and continue driving. They stop for petrol and supplies, which consist of sandwiches and drinks. He takes them on a route that is unfamiliar to the children. It is quite a long journey and the children fall asleep, only to wake up in an indigenous settlement by the river. Osman takes them for a hike and explains the types of vegetation around and they mingle with the indigenous people. Then with a broad smile on his face he exclaims, "School is not important, education is..." echoing Mark Twain's famous quotation, "I never let school interfere with education".

As a father, Osman models the same attitude towards the education of his children. He believes in both formal and informal education, and that knowledge does not just come in bound and paginated form. He believes there is so much to learn outside the classroom.

Conclusion

Osman has learned the importance of playfulness and a sense of humour in his personal life and his teaching. As a vibrant and effervescent person, he learned to feel the joy in helping others and used his communication skills to be responsive to others within the teacher-student relationship. As a visual art teacher educator Osman seeks to transform his students into well-balanced individuals, ready for the real world. It is not solely achieving academic success but also success in life, being fully equipped with living skills and values. He associates his teaching to *Tai-Chi*, in which design is a synergy of hard work and creativity through the step-by-step process of understanding, formulating, reflecting and conceptualizing, and accelerating growth and design maturity towards wholeness. Osman believes that in a collective effort with his students, he has contributed to making his presence felt in the heart of his students in order for them to be ready in the very competitive design education and design industry.

Chapter Seven:
Burn the Listener

Burn absolutely is one of the best lecturers around. He is always there when we need him. Sometimes when we get stuck with our projects, he's there to assist us.

-Student Teacher

Formative experiences

Born to peasant parents in a remote rural village of Banting, Selangor, Burn remembers the difficulties and excitement of his childhood life. Having to walk to school for many kilometres five days a week in the cold morning and back home in the hot humid weather was not fun. He had to wake up by 5.00am otherwise he would be late for school. In school, he did not have much fun either; very little has been remembered or cherished. The only excitement was during art lessons when he learnt to do some craft.

The experiences of schooling throughout his childhood and youth have taught Burn not only what to expect in practical terms, but also to create an emotional mind-set towards the learning environment. He still fondly remembers the

moment that had the greatest impact during his studies.

> My undergraduate study was the most interesting time. My background was not in metal. I had little knowledge in metal. Yet in one or two years, I was able to master the field. I had no idea how it happened. What I knew before, as a child, I created a wooden rifle, and a clay model, but when I attended the university...I could not believe that I could create things from metal. I was excited. I became interested in metal crafts. The most memorable experience was when I was awarded the best student award of the department. So, I received some incentives such as RM500.00 from Koperasi Shamelin in 1985.

He admits that alongside the good memories, he also has bad memories of his tertiary study. He still remembers...

One morning during a foundation drawing class. It was time for the students to present their assignments. The class was not large. One after the other the students presented their art works until it was Burn's turn to present.

"You call this an art work!!!" Tan shouts at Burn. Burn just keeps quiet as does everybody else. Burn is puzzled as he thought he has done his best. He has no clue why Tan, his drawing lecturer is scolding him.

"Rip...rip...rip..." Tan tears his drawing into pieces. Burn's heart beat fast. He looks at the floor like a small child. He knows Tan is capable of doing anything he wishes. Nobody dares to say anything. Going against their lecturer means they'll be marked down. They are accustomed to it. Tearing up their drawings is not unexpected. Tan used to hurl students' artwork through the open windows. Tertiary study was totally different to his schooling experience.

Burn says:

> During my school years, I thought my drawings were great. I was happy when my drawings were selected but, at ITM, when I submitted my best work, the lecturer tore them up. How would you feel? I had a hard time accepting what the lecturer did but I was finally able to understand the reason behind it and I understood. I understood that the lecturer's intention was to show that we needed to work harder and not be complacent with our achievement. There were heaps to be learnt.

He also recalled another incident in ITM when he failed a subject which he considered to be one of his strongest.

> One incident that really touched me...aaa...when I failed Religious Studies. I didn't consider myself a bright student. But in the class, I concentrated. I sat in the front row, took notes and concentrated. During the examination, I felt that I was able to answer all the questions. Before the exam, I thought it was better to hold a discussion group. I was the leader in the dorm, leading and facilitating the group discussion. But I was the one who failed. The reason for my failure was...(thinking)...I did not have any conflict with the lecturer. On the other hand, I did not know if he has...(stopped). I was able to answer all the questions...I was very confident...but I do not know if he did not correct my answer scripts accordingly. Perhaps, it was my own fault. I don't know why? The best of all, those who failed were the department's best students; the best students from Industrial Design, Fine Metal, Graphic, and Textiles. Every one of us

failed. Even today, we are unable to find the answer.

These learning experiences to Burn were too complicated to understand. At one point, he became confused and could not figure out what he should do. He tried to sustain his learning by assessing himself and tried to correct his mistakes. Burn also tried to relate his prior experiences to his school art experiences, and what he was taught by his art teachers. However perseverance and willingness to learn made him stay. He persistently evaluated his progress, corrected his mistakes, and changed his learning strategies. Most of all he engaged himself in metacognition, implemented his preferred learning strategies, determined the degree to which his teachers' instructions met his needs, and undertook remedial learning strategies.

Burn recognised the features of good teaching from an early age, long before he had any notion of being a teacher. He learned almost subconsciously by having what he considered to be some pretty good teachers.

> I don't remember much about my teachers, but I remember one of my teachers, what was her name? Mrs...Mrs...Mrs Norma was her name...a Malay literature teacher. I was not able to comprehend her lessons. However, the best thing was...aaa...the whole class was quiet, we were able to concentrate. We would not have missed her class. She was not that pretty but she had a soothing voice, a motherly attitude, features of an educator, which was her approach. She would get angry but she would not show it. There was a day, when I had graduated; I met her during her visit in Shah Alam. She remembered me even after ten years because I was the kind of student who was not at all good. I was the worst. Her approach was not to be angry. So, due to that, I feel, as students, we must be responsible. She was hardworking, good and focused. If we feel that we would like to go out and play

games, she would grant us permission. She was always around looking after us, and most importantly she allowed students to interact freely. That was really effective for me. She was a teacher, facilitator, disciplinarian, and social worker. What did Mrs. Norma teach me? I guess right from the start I learned that teachers taught not merely academic subjects, but all sorts of things, like fairness, responsibility, and cooperation, and the need for all of us to help each other.

Learning experiences in higher education

In his experience of higher education he remembers a lecturer, Prof. Tamyez who treated him as a friend and mentored him. They continue to have a strong personal and professional relationship. To Burn, Tamyez cultivated respectful relationships.

If we were in class, then, it was class time. However, if it was out of class time, we would be peers. He would buy us coffee, and sometimes we would strum the guitar together. He has a good personality. That was why he has earned our respect. We respected him, and felt that we wanted to be like him or even better. We would work hard for him, although it looked at times as though we did our work to please him, on the other hand, we actually learnt for our own benefit. In addition, normally when we realised that the lecturer was a good person, we would make an attempt to get to know him better, to get closer to him.

> Tamyez also liked to tickle our mind with humour. For example, he asked us to pluck a coconut. We were struggling climbing the tree until he asked us to just get a stick and pull the coconut down. Perhaps we were too obedient!
>
> However he sometimes had a conflicting character. There were times when he was strict. This was especially evident when he was teaching. If he felt like throwing out artworks which did not meet a considerable standard, he would. Perhaps that was the trend and acceptable by everyone, knowing the fact that it was meant to teach us a lesson, for us to work extremely hard and never take things for granted. But that (the throwing of artwork) seldom happened. Since we craved for knowledge and wanted to improve our skills, we didn't care how he taught as long as we were able to acquire the knowledge and skills.

Teaching was not Burn's first choice. He did not choose to become a lecturer as he had other plans in mind.

> After I was awarded my Diploma in Fine Metal (1985), I became a full time tutor in the Fine Metal department. While tutoring, I was also finding ways to start my own business. In fact, I almost quit tutoring because I wanted to be an entrepreneur. I had a partner and a small business to run. We were selling souvenirs and we were doing very well. The prospects were good. When I approached the Head of Department, and mentioned to her that I wanted to quit, she was upset. She convinced me to stay. The Head of Department then, if I'm not mistaken was Associate Prof.

> Ruzuaini[20]. She helped me to secure a scholarship to study abroad. The scholarship was from ITM (now UiTM), called The Young Lecturer Scheme Scholarship. Perhaps she saw my potential in the education field. After a year of tutoring, I furthered my study at the University of Central England, completing a Masters in Industrial Design. I finished my study in 1988. Upon my return, I was offered a position as a lecturer in ITM. I began to teach immediately.

Teaching in higher education was a new experience for Burn. Although he had tutored before, to him this was not comparable to his current teaching job in which he had to deal with students of his age or older. Even his masters degree was not related to art education. However he has learned various ways to address the learning needs of his students.

> When I started to lecture, I definitely had many questions running through my head, but now that I'm more experienced, I can answer those questions. Looking back on my teaching, I'd say that lecturing was a demanding job for me: I had to be prepared to answer questions, organise myself, be patient, and learn my students' strengths and weaknesses. But it was also rewarding to help students. Perhaps my reflections on my lecturing helped my students.
>
> On a practical side, as a lecturer if I was not able to do enough work to keep up with current trends, I had to further my studies or attend courses, or find out information on my own. With my students, that was what I did. I taught them how to find additional information and how to solve problems.

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[20] Pseudonym

> Nowadays, there are websites, articles, colleagues and libraries to find recent information. Conducting research is also important. However, the most important thing to me is self-reflection. We have to see how effective our teaching is. If the students failed to achieve our expectations, we should check where we have gone wrong. That is the basis of my teaching.

He learnt a lot from painful learning experiences but he looks at his learning experiences, especially in UiTM positively. Perhaps that is what makes him successful. Having been taught locally and having the opportunity to study his Masters degree at the University of Central England, Burn was able to compare different approaches to art education. His gentle nature deters him from approaching his teaching in the same way he was taught.

> Now that I am a lecturer, I do not have the heart to do that to my students. Even though, at times, it calls to do the same thing to my students but I do not have the heart. Besides, I believe they would learn even if I did not resort to that type of destructive practice.

True to his words, Burn approaches his teaching based on respect and trust. He has a mature approach although he has never undertaken a teachers' training course. Burn provides a testimony of the emotional challenges in enacting caring teaching. His emotional struggles and the range of positive and negative emotions he had experienced during his formative learning were used as guidelines to inform his teaching and his relationships with his students.

Knowing Burn

Burn has many friends although he is reserved and quiet, yet easily approachable and accessible. He has a down-to-earth attitude and he pays respect to others regardless of their positions. Therefore it is not strange to see Burn being respected in all levels of the organisation. Burn's appropriateness of conduct, politeness, and good manners is his strong characteristic. His natural qualities complemented with his knowledge, skills, and experiences have certainly contributed to his teaching practice.

From the point of view of his students, Burn seems to have developed ideal personality traits such as empathy, enthusiasm, energy, consideration, warmth, understanding, genuineness, and sound moral values. The students also see him as an ideal arbitrator. Because of his calm and logical attitude, he is able to reduce a tense situation with only a few carefully chosen and softly spoken words. This situation normally occurs at the final stage of the submission of students' works when everybody is busy preparing for their presentation and exhibition.

Burn is well-known for his patience. He has a natural poise that his student teachers admire. His quiet demeanour and the ability to conceal his anger make him a pleasure to be around. Sharifah, one of the in-service student teachers during the small-group interview stated,

> One of his most admirable traits is his ability to stay calm in the eye of a storm. Emotion doesn't overwhelm him; anger doesn't enter his heart. He's always calm, cool, and collected. He doesn't get disturbed over situations that would bother others. To him it's not worth getting upset over.

Nevertheless, there was also a moment in which this "calm, cool, and collected" man was tested. The incident happened a few years ago when one of

his students stole his art work, and submitted the work as his. Recalling the event, Burns states,

> I knew it was mine. I then approached the student and asked him to show his portfolio pertaining to the work he submitted to me. I asked him to explain to me everything that he had done in relation to his work starting from the planning process to the end product. Of course, the student was not able to explain appropriately and in depth because it wasn't his work. I then decided to make him do another project. I was disappointed and overwhelmed by the situation. I couldn't imagine a mature person would do such a thing for the sake of getting a good grade. Is that what education is really all about?

As a visual art teacher educator, encountering problems with students is unavoidable. To Burn his biggest problem is having students that lack self-motivation, imagination, and a sense of responsibility. According to Burn,

> I'd say that the biggest problem I had with my students was that a few of them got left behind and never caught up. When they faced the problem, they tried to overcome it on their own and never attempted to contact me. They ended up with poor quality work and missed the relevant lessons. I was sincere in providing them with knowledge. However, when these students were irresponsible in handing in the given tasks. I feel that they frustrated me.
>
> So far, my students have understood [his teachings] and are able to apply what I have taught them. Those who failed, as I have repeatedly mentioned, were usually irresponsible. There was not much I could do although I've tried my very best. It's

up to them to realise their own responsibilities.

Burn cares about his students and his appreciation of the role of emotion in teaching and learning represented a substantive component of his teaching approach. He understood that creating a caring, warm, safe, and supportive, emotional environment matters as much as selecting appropriate learning goals or curriculum content. Burn realised that without contributing to the creation of a supportive emotional environment, his students would face difficulties learning Fine Metal knowing that some of his students have never been exposed to this area. During my small group interview with student teacher participants, it was revealed that they responded better to caring and nurturing teachers than those who constantly alienated them.

Burn's character has been his strong point. He does not have to raise his voice, neither does he need to be a disciplinarian. He does it naturally. I noticed from my class observation of Burn, the way he speaks to his students, inside or outside the class was the same and the way he treated me and his students was also the same.

Burn's commitment and dedication to his job make him respected not only by his colleagues but also his students. He is noted as a competent, steady worker—one who gets along with everyone. In teaching, Burn's commitment and dedication come from his passion for fine metal. According to Burn,

> My motivation for teaching perhaps is my passion for metal (fine metal), especially the craft of metal. And the excitement to see the process and outcome of my students' works. It overrides anything else. I want my students to learn about every aspect of metal.

His students respect his commitment and dedication. During the small group interviews, all of the student teachers praised him. He spent most of the time in

the studio assisting his students and he had no boundaries in terms of helping them. He regarded the studio as his second home.

He accepted the job as Head of Department without grumbling. Perhaps it was his nature not to go against his superiors. Therefore he was given full support in regards to his workload. To Burn, he received all the assistance he needed from the University's upper level management, friends, and students. He elaborated on the students' support towards his job,

> Sometimes, we do have a lot of responsibilities, and the students know that. When they know we are busy, they will try to see us at another time. Sometimes we are only free at night. Well...at certain times we would miss a class or two, sometimes 2-3 classes, consecutively, but I usually replace these with other classes. The good thing is the existence of MyGuru[21], which helps a lot. All the notes can be included in it. For the practical exercise, we would handle it in the workshop.

Additionally, Burn does not neglect his involvement in the broader community,

> I am involved in my residential area and I participate in its 'gotong royong' (cooperative community work), and, I am a committee member in the Parent-Teachers' Association of the Methodist Primary School.

His commitments contributing to the betterment of the community provides him an avenue to understand the world outside that of academia. Similarly he believes that academics and society need to work together.

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[21] MyGuru is a web portal in which the academic places material online.

Learning to teach

Burn has no formal training in teaching philosophy, pedagogy, methodology, strategies, and approaches. He initially understood teaching as the traditional way of teaching which was based on a master-apprenticeship model which he had experienced as a student,

> Well, before I joined UoEM, I was not attached to the education department. So, for me to fully understand what education is, I needed to mingle around to obtain information in art education. Not just that, I even had to mingle with lecturers from the other departments.
>
> While I was in ITM, I taught a lot of skills such as woodcraft. So, when I joined UoEM, I perceived my teaching as just developing skills. But I was wrong. I wanted to produce the best art work out of my students. Now my teaching methods have undergone some changes. I have started to teach the students ways to improve their creativity and ideas. I have reduced the teaching of skills and instead I have increased the teaching of creativity.
>
> Even though I was teaching creative thinking, the university was more focused on 'churning out' teachers. There's bound to be a difference. So, I have to plan my lesson to suit my students. I made a lot of adjustments. I do not concentrate fully on skills as I used to...not 100%, but just enough. Mmmm...maybe around 60% to 70%. The other lecturers will fill the gap. I focus more on pedagogy. Now I realised that during my teaching days in ITM, I was teaching them to be

entrepreneurs, to be professionals. That was the difference.

Realising that he is in a university that trains primary and secondary teachers, he adapts appropriate skills and teaching techniques to suit the requirements of future teachers. He blends his teaching with a mixture of developing professional artists and professional teachers.

Good visual art teaching

Burn believes that good visual art teaching and learning consists of various factors. The most important factor according to Burn are the visual art teacher educators' art knowledge and skills, interests, communication, and respect. In a higher education setting, especially in a studio-based course, knowledge of the subject and skills are essential. According to Burn,

> You must be an expert in your field if you are going to be a good visual art teacher educator at a university. This is a prerequisite. A good visual art teacher educator starts with a firm knowledge of the subject, and builds on that with a clarity and understanding designed to help students master the material. The best teachers then go one step further. Because good teachers are interested in the material being taught, they make the class interesting and relevant to the students. Knowledge is worthless unless it is delivered to the students in a form they can understand. They show students how the material will apply to their lives and their careers. If the teacher isn't interested in what's being taught, then why should the students be?

In teaching, Burn regards communication as one of the most important aspects. This is because effective communicators present coherent and meaningful messages. This allows students to interpret the intended meaning correctly.

> Instructions must be clear. So students can get clear information. If not, it would create problems. I was impressed by one of my lecturers who had a sense of humour. He managed to get across his messages in a smart way and that kind of teaching lasted in my mind. What is important here is the ability to touch our minds in various ways. When communicating with students, I make use of content that is relevant to their interests, experiences, and life-styles. I normally use examples from common experiences of my students. Although in Metal sometimes there are some technical terms, I try to explain to them in a simple way and avoid technical jargon.

Burn also believes that good visual art teacher educators should have a deep-seated concern and respect for the students, inside or outside classrooms.

> It's a good idea that we spend time with our students so we can learn about them and from them. For me, the only thing that would drive me to do that is a concern and respect for the adults in my classroom.

The goals of art education

To Burn, any good teaching should aim at achieving certain goals. He understands the aims of art education are to instil self-confidence, self-esteem,

and to develop a culture conscious individual. Art production is one aspect. Visual art educators need the ability to heighten their students' gratefulness to Allah, to appreciate the beauty of the environment, art, and the national heritage. In achieving these aims they would be contributing towards self-development, social, and national development, in accordance with the Malaysian National Education Philosophy. To support his teaching and learning strategies Burn states,

> I often discuss with my students during the beginning of the semester the objectives of my teaching...in terms of techniques and process, and I would instruct them, immediately, but I would leave creativity to them. I would give them the freedom to explore their artworks, to build character and self-esteem and simultaneously have good aesthetic values, imagination, innovation and invention. As I have explained before, problem-solving in my teaching provides these students with some space to learn, co-operatively. Students' assignments are discussed openly and individually. In terms of content, of course, I am not able to cover them all. Students must learn to search for additional knowledge to complete their assignments.

Understanding of art education

Burn understands art education as a subject that consists of numerous fields of fine art such as fine metal, sculpture, drawing, printing, and graphic design as the core subjects. Art education also requires teaching methods and pedagogy, other integral elements that need to be mastered. To Burn although he is

teaching a studio course, his teaching is not guided by a studio-based approach,

> My understanding in regards to art education is...I have always been in the practical field...metal, handicrafts, right? So, on the whole, art education covers numerous fields such as Fine Art, Graphic, Handicrafts and Art Formation. That is my understanding of art education. Also that it is the whole view of art education at the secondary and tertiary level. However, the most important factor is, through art education, other than exposing them to skills, we are able to integrate other concepts in the activities carried out such as values, behaviour and good morale in the students. At any time...during my teaching, I am able to integrate other fields. That is good teaching. It is always related to other fields. Either in science or IT. In my teaching, I would also connect knowledge to the real world. A lecturer should also be a person of calibre. This is required in the education field.

However, Burn seemed to contradict himself when he mentioned that good visual art teaching should relate directly to the final product. According to Burn, "A good final product reflects good teaching and learning techniques. It's because if a visual art teacher educator approaches his teaching effectively, the result of his teaching will be reflected in the good art work produced." This approach neglects the importance of process in classroom contexts.

Approaches to visual art teaching

Burn feels that the teaching and learning approaches in higher education differ from those of schools. Burn gives *carte blanche* to his students to create their

own work. He knows that his students already have sound skills in art. It is a matter of polishing their skills, and equipping them with new knowledge, not only the ability to produce admirable art works but also to understand the process of making the work in a scholarly manner. In addition,

> The difference...in the tertiary level, we would like to train and educate teachers. In schools, we must sharpen skills and inculcate good values. However, I feel that at the tertiary level, it is a bit difficult because other than providing them with skills and understanding in each field, we need to educate them in how to teach. I also try to make the subject relevant by tying it into social responsibility and how that affects us as future citizens. The point is we're not only learning about art, we're also learning about how it affects us in society. Prior to this I focused more of my teaching in moulding skills but now, I understand my role as a lecturer which is not just to teach and develop skills but to espouse the philosophy of teaching and learning.
>
> Therefore it is my goal to plan each class period to involve both an informative presentation and a studio experience or discussion that will involve active participation. Specific preparation is often necessary for these experiences...discussions, and discussions are normally based on the assignments given to them (students) to gain a deeper understanding of their work.

In his teaching, Burn believes that visual art teacher educators have to take skills and knowledge out of context—in a way which makes considerable demands on the student who is just beginning to learn in a new area. To Burn, teaching needs not only specific knowledge acquired by visual art teacher educators in their own area but also the knowledge to adjust to the ability of

students and encourage them to apply this knowledge and make use of it in their daily lives.

Burn also believes that visual art teacher educators need to instil the right attitudes. According to Burn,

> What I mean by the right attitude is the one that conforms to the majority, and is acceptable to everyone. For example, when we were asked to keep a record of our work such as course synopsis, notes, examination papers, and answer scripts samples, satisfactory and weak or even failures, we have to oblige. There's nothing wrong with it. It's a way of handling things more systematically. It makes our job more organised. So from there we are able to assess if the curriculum content complies with the university standard. If there is any weakness, it would be easier to trace from the source. If the students do not perform, we can trace their weaknesses. But to some people, it's messy and adds more workload to their existing work.

Burn feels that the students should also play their roles. He regards students' performance as dependent on their attitudes in relation to their learning process.

> It is just the technical understanding that is often difficult. Sometimes, the procedures are good and the academic staffs are decent but...the students are problematic. We can teach them the basics but they would not master it just yet, because they are new to it. They cannot be as good as us. But with time, they can be as good as their teachers or better.

Burn notices from his observation of visual art teaching approaches that the

obvious approaches used in school are based on production and discusses the problems of such an approach,

> Through the teaching practicum, I noticed most of my trainees taught on art production. It is seldom that I see...what I would call...their comprehension in inculcating the value in teaching and learning of art education. They seldom inject philosophies, principles, aesthetics, and art history in their teachings. The strengths are in the development of the students' skills, nothing else. The weaknesses are that the activities carried out fail to integrate cognition, values, and behaviours and lift the morale of students. So, the failure is to unite these objectives.

An important characteristic of his teaching approach is the degree of interaction between him and his students. He plans activities which prompt discussion in class.

> In my class, we have a lot of individual and small group discussion. We have face-to-face communication, group discussion, and MyGuru. We are engaged in forming and voicing our views. I would prepare my own questions and the students prepare their own. Lots of questions stimulate our thinking and students are actively engaged in thinking and generating their opinions. These interactions provide the students with a platform to practice in critical discussion which helped in the development of critical thinking and higher order thinking capabilities.

Burn practises what he espouses. During my observation of his teaching, Burn modelled what I considered to be good visual art teaching. He was softly-spoken, but managed to get across his messages quite clearly to his students.

His students understood his teaching and also his non-verbal messages. A good example of a non-verbal message was when Burn did not respond to his students' explanation that made them realise that something was wrong. Perhaps he was thinking of a solution however his students felt it indicated the inappropriateness of what they had said.

He was not only knowledgeable and skilful in his own field but also displayed good teaching techniques and approaches. I observed the students comfortably present their portfolios and give their views without hesitation. Burn's approach was quite informal and underpinned by reflection. He showed his students how to analyse an issue in depth. He refrained himself from being too didactic or directive. Instead he prompted and encouraged his students to explore issues themselves. He did not give them a ready-made answer and he expected them to further explore the topic themselves. He used questions to stimulate his students to think more deeply about the issue.

One of his students, Shah, commented on his approach,

> Sometimes the more he asks, the clearer it becomes. But at other times the more he asks the more unclear it becomes. From the beginning, based on my own perception of thinking of my design, I felt firm about my idea. Then I made time to go and see him. He would not give me an alternate idea and tell me that my original one is not good. Rather, he will ask me questions, 'Tell me more about your work?', 'Do you think this is good in this way here?', 'Why did you do this, and why did you do that?" and 'What if...?' I recognise that he is trying to make me reflect on my own work. But when he is posing so many questions, this leads me to wonder if he wants me to do it in a different way. Sometimes, if I've done a poor job, he will discuss it with me in private. It's quite

flexible and informal and I don't feel stressed.

Teaching strategies

In order to improve his teaching Burn employs a few strategies based on his teaching and learning experiences. Burn believes that he needs to understand various teaching strategies that he deems will enhance his students' learning outcomes. To ensure his teaching strategies work, he tries not to put unnecessary pressure on his students or to be dogmatic in his approach.

> As in other studio courses, among the teaching strategies that I employ is student presentations. My students will have to present their works every fortnight to other students. This is aimed to develop a deeper understanding of the material and actively engages them in their learning. This strategy is also considered as an exercise in communication…which is needed in a teacher…to be able to talk and explain clearly...and get their message across.

During my observation of his studio class, I noticed Burn paid full attention to his student's explanation and respected their views. He listened to the students explaining their artworks and then followed through with some questions related to his students' works. He then suggested to his students to consider other points to enhance their artworks. The way his students reacted and behaved towards him was clearly highly respectful but friendly. After the observations, in the third interview I asked Burn about his teaching approach,

> Basically I'm teaching my students to develop thinking skills on top of art skills. I want my students to think logically and defend an idea, to demonstrate the skill to analyse somebody

> else's idea, to make comparisons, and to draw analogies. Particularly in art, we're not just training students to become teachers, we're training students to be active members of a society.

This 'thinking' approach was observable although not strongly apparent among the students. They tried hard to demonstrate an ability to defend their ideas but in the end, it looked like the "master is always right" attitude prevailed. It was hard for students to resist this due to cultural expectation.

Burn is also aware of the influence of technological advancements. He uses a web-based forum to interact with his students.

> I also interact with my students using the website forum 'MyGuru'. I can write out a problem in the website and the students will respond and provide feedback. Every student is able to provide suggestions in MyGuru. Using MyGuru, I instigate an online brainstorming session. I stress that all ideas, no matter how 'way out' they seem, are encouraged and that they are not to criticise anyone's ideas. The result of this is that the session can be used as the basis for more detailed discussion.

His students agreed that *MyGuru* helps them considerably although at certain times it was not effective due to lack of facilities. They also found it expensive to access the internet from cyber cafés. They thought that *MyGuru* was a good way to enhance knowledge development but was still in need of further development.

Methods to visual art teaching

Burn believes that the best methods to teach students generally depend on the students. However, he finds that most of his students learn well by going over key concepts and then applying the concepts through a problem-solving approach.

> The students can ask questions about what they don't understand about the ideas. They can see the manifestation of the concept by working on the problems. Most of my students are visual learners, and I try to stimulate their visual perception by using teaching aids. Also, I find that students learn well by going through problems step-by-step. Many times, they want to jump through material without understanding each step, so when we have a consultation session together, I make sure they go slowly and try not to rush through the material.

In his method of teaching, Burn not only explains but also demonstrates to increase knowledge and understanding.

> My explanation and demonstration consists of two components. The first involves the presentation of subject matter, such as facts, procedures, and the principles of rules to be explained or demonstrated. The second involves the use of examples of physical objects, models, and pictures.

At the end of the semester, he would normally get all the students together to evaluate his teaching and discuss what they have learnt. Burn is always willing to listen to his students. He always listens attentively and carefully to the explicit and implicit messages transmitted by his students. He seeks feedback from his students in order to evaluate the effectiveness of his teaching.

> I first asked my students what they were going over, what they had the most problems with and how they were feeling about the class overall. We went over that, then went over the current material together, did sample problems, and then summarised the information that we went over together. At first, I paraphrased what we went over together, but later on I found that asking the students to summarise the information was better because it made them think about what they did. The summary was also a way to refresh the students' minds before the session was over.

Since his class enrolment was small, Burn finds *cooperative learning* in his teaching a useful tool. His students were a group of selected students that achieved good grades in Art during their A level exam; however, their knowledge and experience in Fine Metal were almost negligible. Burn knows that some of his students have been exposed to Fine Metal especially those from Kelantan and Trengganu, the two states in Malaysia in which metal crafts are well known for their finesse. He was aware that to a certain extent a few of his students belong to family run metal craft businesses. By using cooperative learning, he facilitates the expert students in metal craft in assisting the less knowledgeable students. Each member of a group is responsible, not only for learning what was taught, but also for helping his or her group learn—thus creating an atmosphere of achievement towards a common goal. According to Burn,

> The ultimate success of the cooperative learning that I used is based on a very important principle: students must be taught how to participate in a group situation. Not only have they learned about specific knowledge and skills, but also they have learned how to behave in a group setting which is important for them as a teacher. At the same time, I would

include problem-solving as a task that they should resolve. Students can take on some of the responsibility for their own learning and can take personal action to solve problems, resolve conflicts, discuss alternatives, and focus on thinking as a vital element of their learning experience. It provides students with opportunities to use their newly acquired knowledge in meaningful, real-life activities.

Relationships

Burn believes healthy relationships can provide a fulfilling and exciting experience. To Burn relationships are an important part of life, whether they are relationships with family, superiors, friends, students, or society.

> I try to establish a good rapport with everyone regardless of who they are. Here in UoEM, professionally it's 100% good. Everyone is helpful. However I cannot deny that sometimes there are personal problems that I need to sort out by myself. Most of the time I manage to pull through and it has never affected my teaching.

Regarding his relationship with his students, Burn believes that the understanding of the interdependencies between teachers and students is important. To Burn, "there are no lecturers when there are no students" and "we always learn new things from our students". He emphasises inclusiveness, mutuality, reciprocity, empathy, and understanding in his teaching. He shows his efforts to create learning communities in which the "I" of individual agendas become "We", contracts are replaced by commitments, competitions are replaced by collaboration, and individualistic purposes, values, and agendas

are replaced by shared values. Related to this, a student teacher participant, Niza, comments,

> Burn has an open door policy whereby students feel welcome to go and see him whenever they need. Most of the students will take that opportunity especially knowing the fact that there is not much material that can be found in the library or on the net especially in relation to traditional metal handicrafts and its technical aspects of it. He is always very happy and able to give us guidance whenever we seek his help. Most importantly he is willing to listen and understand our problems.

Burn believes that it is essential to be knowledgeable of his students' background and characteristics. Therefore he works towards understanding his students' skills, attitudes and interests. Burn realises that when students perceive that their teachers are interested in their personal needs, they are usually willing to listen and respond appropriately. Burn's demonstration of understanding and concern enhance positive relationships with his students and this in turn improves the effectiveness of his teaching. One of the pre-service student teachers, Fazilah, commented on Burn's character,

> He is so pleasant and inoffensive. In the midst of our work pressure, his low-key personality seemed to bring us into perspective. He worked with whatever idea that was brought up. He was always laying plans; and he fits into any slot he is dropped in. No one ever wanted him to leave, and he became part of the class.

Another student teacher commented,

> Burn absolutely is one of the best lecturers around. He is

> always there when we need him. Sometimes when we get stuck with our projects, he's there to assist us. It could be anytime because most of the time he's in the studio. Sometimes, even if he's not in the studio, when my friend called him to help with her project, he would come.

Responding to his student's comment, Burn replied, "The reason I didn't leave (the studio) was it was there was just too much work to do." He continually encourages all his students, irrespective of their ability. Burn's students love to work with him. Because of the lack of evident pressure or criticism, the students seem motivated to give extra. Their self-esteem is elevated because of this environment, and as a result the quality of their art works increase. This conducive learning environment helps maintain the teacher-student relationship.

Peer learning

Burn regards peer learning as helpful to his teaching with the purpose of self-improvement and to enhance his learning. He recognises the social milieu of the workplace which helps him to understand better the world of academia especially knowing that he has limited formal knowledge of teaching. Peer learning to Burn is a way to recognise the importance of becoming more self-aware, as part of his change process. The contributing factors to his comprehension of visual art education mainly come from his acquaintance with his colleagues. Burn explains,

> Aaaah...the knowledge on (art education)...yes...the factors are mainly colleagues. Colleagues from an education, pedagogical and methodological background such as Mr.

> Jailani Sidek[22] and Mr. Hussaini[23]. So, in education, through formal and informal discussions I have acquired the knowledge, especially in curriculum or planning of courses. In art education, I must fully understand the instructions from the upper level and work towards realizing the goal set by them. My current position necessitates my full understanding in teaching curriculum, on objectives and goals which then, I base my teachings upon. That is what I think is suitable.

Burn believes that establishment of a supportive climate for visual art teacher educators' learning is important especially for those without or with limited teaching experience. This learning community could either be informal or formal depending on the requirement of the individual visual art teacher educator.

Self-reflection

The lack of formal knowledge in teaching does not hinder Burn from finding ways to overcome his weaknesses. One of his strategies is self reflection.

> Sometimes at the end of the semester, I would have two to three students who would not perform well. So, I would ask myself, "Are these the students I have taught?" Have I taught them enough? Then, when I see two or three students who excel, I wonder how they are able to perform so well. Is it because I did not pay enough attention to those who are

[22] Pseudonym

[23] Pseudonym

> weak? It certainly seems that way...well...this is the conflict within. Why should there be good and bad students? I thought that I have given them all my best.

Burn often tries to identify where his teaching may have gone wrong when his students do not perform.

> I thought that the knowledge that I'd provided to them (the students) was enough, but there were among them those who question me and I was unable to provide them with good answers during my teaching. Then I began to question myself, have I provided them with enough information? If I was unable to provide them with good satisfactory answers, I feel that something was wrong. Therefore, if I felt that it was inadequate, I would look for more information and upgrade my knowledge. My students were young and up to date. So, if I was not open to change, I would be outdated. I'd normally refer to websites, articles, enquire from friends, or conduct research.

Burn has high expectations of his students and himself. He believes that what he has taught them is never enough. He hopes that his students, when they go out and teach, will be able to develop knowledge and skills on their own, and extend the knowledge he has given them to the next generation of learners.

> ...and I hope one day, my students will be able to start their own businesses and secure projects in metal. I would be happy if my students are able to develop their talents in this field.

He would convey his hopes to his students during the first week of lectures and the last week of lectures,

> Normally during the first week, when I hand out the course content and background, I will tell my students what I expect from them by explaining the objectives of the course that I'm teaching. During the assessment week...I would do reflection in regards to their learning. Those are the times when I convey my hopes. So during my teaching career, sometimes when there were students who failed at the end of my teaching programme, even though I have done my best and that was the frustrating moment.
>
> To me, if there is a student who fails my class, I feel I am to blame. So, I would try my best, and if the student was not able to perform at their best, I would try to guide them in any way possible because I know that they can perform if well guided. It has been proven because there were two to three students who have failed, and I have tried to help and guide them. As it is, Alhamdulillah (Thank God) they could perform. They could not perform because of financial and personal problems. However, when I get closer to them, they could actually perform.

Burn cherishes friendship. He is adaptable and is a good listener. He has many friends around him. He would rather listen than talk. He is calm, patient, and inoffensive. Burn has an easygoing nature that is admirable and makes him the favourite of any group: students, colleagues, friends, family, and society. His willingness to change is due to his love of new ideas. Not only has he changed the already comfortable teaching position and environment in a big city to start a new life with his family in a small township, but his willingness to change his teaching approach has earned him respect. Although lacking teaching experience, Burn expressed his sense of certainty about teaching his students and his desire to continually learn. Burn is not afraid of innovation. His

confidence grows each day, and his passion for teaching seems to make him eager to learn more about teaching. The students perceive his performance to be fair and equitable in terms of his distribution of attention and assessment of students. They also identify the student-focused construction of his performance, and see these practices as being oppositional to and more desirable than, teacher exposition. He is concerned with developing students' critical thinking capacities.

Conclusion

Burn's narrative of his journey illustrates the process of learning from past experience, the value of self-knowledge, self-acceptance, and an attitude of self-worth in the development of an authentic professional identity. He described how he came to know his beliefs, values, and understanding of good visual art teaching in a higher education setting. He explained how he found his purpose in helping students to know themselves, to acquire self-respect and self-worth. Burn's narrative was testimony to the value of reflection in professional learning and to treating all experiences as rich sources of learning—the painful and difficult along with the positive and enjoyable. His narratives showed his struggles and joys of achieving small successes in the ongoing journey of professional growth. Burn used his natural characteristics to the fullest extent in which caring and empathetic relationships with students are at the core. Drawing on his experiences and knowledge he focused on helping students to develop self-respect, self-esteem, and a sense of self-worth. He showed his support and empathy for students, and he demonstrated care and concern through his actions. As a person who also has exceptional listening skills Burn illustrated the ways in which relationships provide the context for

professional learning and inquiry. He focused on creating relationships with students and colleagues, and on making new connections between existing ideas in professional education and professional practice. He explored the ways in which relationships with others have provided a framework in which he has learned throughout his life, in which his identity has been formed throughout his professional learning. His continuous and ongoing search for personal and professional advancement in teaching provides insights into how he learned about such issues such as choosing appropriate and relevant visual art teaching strategies, dealing with the organisation and presentation of subject material, administering the details of classroom management, and directing his ongoing professional growth. Burn's narratives showed how he learned to understand teaching and learning as primarily relational endeavours. His accounts explored the ways in which he has learned from and with other people and from a wide variety of sources. He showed how he has reflected on his past experiences and used the knowledge gained to learn what he needed to know about creating professional relationships with students and colleagues. He described his efforts to address student teachers' needs; to win their respect, trust, and allegiance; and to identify teaching strategies that support student dialogue, interaction, and collaborative meaning making.

Epilogue

This exploration of the perceptions of four visual art teacher educators of what constitutes good visual art teaching in a Malaysian higher education setting is close to an end. The aim of the study, to deepen understanding of the characteristic features of good visual art teaching in this higher education setting can be reviewed in light of the narrative accounts. In this chapter I shall revisit the key issues that have emerged in relation to the phenomenon under investigation.

As mentioned in Chapter Two, there are few commonly agreed definitions of good teaching in higher education and this study showed the same scenario. This study indicated that the plethora of models and variety of interpretations of what constitutes good teaching are closely related to individuals' experiences, knowledge, and personality.

Cochran-Smith (2004) suggests that good teaching is "an intellectual, cultural, and contextual activity that requires skilful decisions about how to convey subject matter knowledge, apply pedagogical skills, develop human relationships, and both generate and utilize local knowledge" (p. 298). All of the visual art teacher educator participants acknowledged that good visual art teaching in higher education is an intellectual, cultural, and contextual activity. Therefore, in the following section I will focus on Cochran-Smith's elements of subject matter knowledge, the application of pedagogical skills, the development of human relationships and the ability of the participants to generate and utilise local knowledge in order to determine the ways in which this study extends our understanding of what constitutes good visual art teaching in a higher education setting in Malaysia.

Subject matter knowledge

Subject matter knowledge has long been identified as a prerequisite of good teaching in any setting (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2004b; Feldman, 1988; Grauer, 1999; Hativa, Barak, & Simhi, 2001). Grauer (1999) states subject matter knowledge in the visual arts allows "teachers to connect and relate knowledge of art history, aesthetics, media, technique, cultural and social context and image development strategies to the problem at hand" (p. 20).

In this study, all of the visual art teacher educators demonstrated a strong discipline-based professional identity: for Johan, art criticism and philosophy of art; for Hijas—philosophy of art education, curriculum, and methodology; for Osman—graphic design; and, for Burn—fine metal design. Each of the visual art teacher educators came from a range of colleges or universities which provided different types of teaching and learning orientation. Johan completed his first degree in Malaysia and then pursued a Master's degree and PhD at the same university; Hijas and Osman completed their first degree in Malaysia, and then furthered their study by undertaking Master's degrees in the US; and Burn completed his first degree in Malaysia and then continued his Master's degree in the UK. Johan, Osman, and Burn obtained their first degree from the same higher education institution which focuses on studio-based practices to prepare students as professional artists and entrepreneurs. Hijas obtained his first degree from a university which concentrated on the theoretical and practical aspects of fine art.

This study reveals the key role of subject matter knowledge as a requirement for good visual art teaching in higher education. The visual art teacher educator participants believe that good visual art teaching requires an understanding of the range of subjects they teach. They further suggest that visual art teaching in higher education is a specialised area that requires specific visual art knowledge and skills informed by relevant theoretical constructs and experience. This view is supported by Morris and Morris (2002) who propose that visual art teacher educators' competency is closely related to their subject

matter knowledge. The visual art teacher educator participants described well developed subject knowledge as a key attribute of good visual art teaching in higher education and made concerted efforts to maintain and develop this aspect of their professional work. This is evident in their endeavours to improve their knowledge and skills by furthering their studies, attending conferences, and conducting research.

According to Groundwater-Smith, Ewing, and Cornu (2003), "It is only when teachers engage in continuing professional development that they develop attitudes, knowledge, skills and understanding to improve both the learning environment and their pedagogy" (p. 153). Osman, for example, further develops his understanding of visual art teaching by attending conferences and seminars and conducting research in order to remain current in his field. Burn engages in peer reviews of colleagues' teaching as a way to enhance his pedagogical skills and expand his knowledge to keep abreast with current educational developments. This is evident in his statement, "as a lecturer if I was not able to keep up with current trends, I had to undertake further study or attend courses, or find out information on my own".

Whilst each of the visual art teacher educator participants agreed that what they learned as students from their lecturers has no doubt influenced their teaching practice they felt that this influence was not overly significant. More importantly each of the visual art teacher educator participants suggest that it is how we reflect on our teaching practice and our learning experiences that has the most impact on our beliefs and practices concerning good visual art teaching. These visual art teacher educator participants are examples of what Donald Schön (1983) has termed 'reflective practitioners,' the professional who acquires expertise by learning through reflection-in-action[24], and reflection-on-

[24] The notion of reflection-in-action involves looking to our experiences, connecting with our feelings, and attending to our theories in use. It entails building new understandings to inform our actions in the situation that is unfolding (Schön 1983, p. 68).

action[25]. This study suggests that these visual art teacher educator participants also develop their teaching practices by reflecting on what they have learned from their life-experience. Johan's childhood experiences have taught him to be a highly disciplined person and he uses his experiences to inculcate the importance of discipline and self-discipline in his dealings with other people. Osman encountered difficulties with learning as a child and therefore in his role as a visual art teacher educator he endeavours to make his students' learning an enjoyable and positive process. Burn's experiences as a learner of being humiliated by teachers for making mistakes has lead him to avoid using that strategy in his teaching in a higher education setting. This is evident in his statement, "Now that I am a lecturer, I do not have the heart to do that to my students. Even though, at times, it calls to do the same thing to my students but I do not have the heart. Besides, I believe they would learn even if I did not resort to that type of destructive practice."

Application of pedagogical skills

Studies have shown that pedagogical knowledge (Askell-Williams, 2004; Cochran-Smith, 2001; Shulman, 1999; Tran & Lawson, 2007) and pedagogical content knowledge (Eisner, 2002b; Shulman, 1999) are deemed to be key factors that contribute to good teaching. Pedagogy is no longer described as a set of techniques that enable teachers to maintain discipline or to entice students to pay attention, but instead is described as integral to the substantive goals of teaching (Kennedy, 1997). The visual art teacher educator participants' pedagogical practices reflected their beliefs and values and were closely related to: their life experiences, teaching and learning experiences, the specific art discipline they were teaching, and the type of higher education context they worked within.

In this study, the visual art teacher educator participants consider pedagogical

[25] Reflection-on-action enables practitioners to spend time analysing why they acted as they did, and what was happening in the classroom, and so on. (Schön 1983, 68)

content knowledge in the domain of teaching and learning, particularly in the teacher education setting, to be crucial. Johan and Hijas for example, suggest that it is essential for every visual art teacher educator to have prior knowledge and experience in the teaching of visual art at all levels of teaching. Having taught in various school settings, both Johan and Hijas stressed that as the prime aim of teacher education is to prepare teachers, it is even more important to have knowledge and experience of teaching in addition to specific art knowledge and skills. In this study it was significant that the visual art teacher educator participants drew on their teaching experiences to argue for an appropriate model for teacher education. Visual art teacher educator participants, Johan and Hijas, who had attended teachers training college tended to argue for the value of a practical college-type teacher preparation as they felt this resulted in stronger pedagogical knowledge of teaching.

Hijas having experienced learning in both local and international educational institutions firmly believed in the need to invigorate the contents of the local visual art education curriculum. Hence Hijas' teaching was underpinned by the Malaysian National Philosophy of Education which promotes the view that education is an on-going effort towards further developing the potentials of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner in addition to incorporating the art education theories and philosophies of the West. Osman and Burn, were exposed to the same local university education which focused on producing professional artists and entrepreneurs. In addition they both experienced an overseas education which also focused on studio-based teaching and learning approaches. Consequently, their teaching was focused on the attainment of those visual art knowledge and skills required by professional artists. However, as reflective visual art teacher educators, they modified their teaching approaches to incorporate the needs of their students in addition to fulfilling the requirements specified by the University of Education Malaysia. Osman and Burn not only teach visual art knowledge and skills but also integrate pedagogical content knowledge in their teachings. They are aware that teaching visual art in UoEM differs from teaching art in other higher education settings..

Whilst the findings of this study suggest that experience in teaching is necessary, it is not in itself sufficient. It appears that the most important factor identified by the participants is the need to continually improve subject matter knowledge, curricular knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1986). Hence, we can see in addition to teaching qualifications, the visual art teacher educators' individual efforts and the university's professional development programs are also important factors that contribute to on-going development of skills and knowledge. Osman's and Burn's commitment to education, a belief in lifelong learning and a desire to improve their own teaching practice and reinvent themselves in response to changing conditions demonstrates their awareness of the elements required to engage in good visual art teaching in higher education. This is evident from Burn's statement: "So, I have to plan my lesson to suit my students. I made a lot of adjustments. I do not concentrate fully on skills as I used to...not 100%, but just enough. Mmmm...maybe around 60% to 70%. The other lecturers will fill the gap. I focus more on pedagogy. Now I realised that during my teaching days in ITM, I was teaching them to be entrepreneurs, to be professionals. That was the difference."

This study demonstrates that good visual art teaching is defined by responsiveness to ever-changing conditions and a continuous search to improve teaching and learning. Good visual art teaching is shaped by the ways that individual visual art teacher educators work to improve themselves, their ability to cope with change, and their commitment to continuous improvement (Childs-Bowen, Moller, & Scrivner, 2000; Hargreaves, 2002). Burn utilised peer review to enhance his teaching skills and teaching methods. This peer review approach assisted Burn in learning from more experienced colleagues, and developing the skills to evaluate his teaching in a process of improvement, This notion corresponds with Hutchings and Shulman's (1999) views on the importance of ongoing-evaluation, inquiry, and reflection as an important ingredient in the scholarship of teaching.

This study demonstrated congruence between participants' beliefs, values and

their teaching practices and the life shaping factors that have underpinned and informed their teaching practice. However, there were differences in relation to student-centred or teacher-centred strategies adopted by participants. Osman and Burn for example adopted student-centred strategies whilst Johan and Hijas utilised teacher-centred strategies. These strategies were influenced by factors such as the size of the class, discipline areas, and participants' beliefs and understandings of good visual art teaching strategies. In addition, there was a relationship between the visual art teacher educators' control of the teaching and learning process and their personality and beliefs which also underpinned and informed their teaching practice.

In this study all of the visual art teacher educator participants shared the same contention that rapid changes in society, technology and their subsequent effect on specialist fields such as art education necessitated a continual expansion of their understanding about visual art teaching. In this respect however, the visual art teacher educator participants were inclined to develop their knowledge and skills in their specialised area such as art history, theory and criticism (Johan and Hijas) or studio discipline areas (Osman and Burn), perhaps forgoing the broader connections that could be made in art education more generally.

Classroom management is looked at differently by all of the visual art teacher educator participants. Johan strongly believed that effective classroom management is crucial in order for learning to take place. He dealt with inappropriate student behaviour before it became an issue, by controlling the performances of the student teachers in the class. Hijas would directly notify his students if he considered they were not behaving appropriately. Osman dealt with student misbehaviour by using humour. Burn did not appear to face any issues relating to class control by using an approach that positively reinforced appropriate student teachers' behaviour. Perhaps this is due to the size of his studio classes (approximately 15 students) compared to those of Johan and Hijas (more than 90 students). Hence it is important to note the differing management requirements of a lecture compared to those of the

studio.

In conclusion, this study suggests that even without formal teaching experience and education, good visual art teaching could still be achieved through deep subject knowledge, strong local knowledge, and a commitment to ongoing professional development. Although prior teaching experience is seen as an important factor, visual art teacher educator participants believe that those without extensive teaching experience, can still develop their teaching skills and knowledge through various efforts such as: attending professional development, seminars, workshops; engaging in self-reflection and peer-review; conducting research; and maintaining an active interest in developing pedagogical knowledge.

The development of human relationships

Gomez, Allen and Clinton (2004) argue that "the notion of care can be used as a lens through which to explore relationships between and among teachers and students, as well as the cultural, institutional, and societal contexts in which these relations exist" (p. 473). A key finding of this study suggests that caring is an important element to establishing a good teaching and learning relationship. The visual art teacher educator participants' beliefs and values revealed that strong commitment to relationships is seen as a characteristic of good visual art teaching. As Killen (2007) notes, when teaching is understood as a relational endeavour, the role of the visual art teacher educators shifts from that of an 'all-knowing' individual to that of a learner who is open to new perspectives and whose knowledge is always being remade. In such a view, visual art teacher educator and student teachers relationships which have been based on authority, superiority and power are replaced by those based on respect, reciprocity, care, and trust. These relationships are based on a high degree of responsiveness to the other, acknowledge and respect the voices of others, and, show respect for other peoples' ideas, purposes, motivations, personal agendas, and knowledge. Relationships such as these provide a

context for understanding students' needs, perspectives, and motivations, and for gaining their support which may result in greater commitment to their studies. However, a successful relationship of this kind is also affected by the numbers of students in each class. Higher class enrolments can make it difficult for effective communication and thus can impact on teacher-student relationships.

This study suggests that visual art teaching in higher education does not take place in isolation but is impacted by the teacher/student relationship within the wider institutional and socio-cultural context. The elements of good teaching therefore encompass the ability to establish good rapport and relationships, respect, mutual understanding, and communication. This study reveals that the visual art teacher educator participants are influenced by their need to sustain positive professional relationships with their student teachers and also by their individual beliefs about their role as a visual art teacher educator in their institution and society. Discussion and interaction with the perspectives of others can assist in defining and clarifying the difficulties, problems, and dilemmas of professional learning and practice. Burn and Osman, believe that discussions and interaction with colleagues and students have helped them to develop a better understanding of good visual art teaching practice. As Burn states, "I often discuss with my students during the beginning of the semester the objectives of my teaching."

Personal characteristics

Studies have shown that personal characteristics such as friendliness, flexibility (Theophilides & Terenzini, 1981) and accessibility and availability (Wilson, Woods, & Gaff, 1974) are positive attributes for educators. These characteristics according to Bernier, Larose and Soucy (2005) have a greater impact on students' positive perceptions of teachers compared to professional traits such as knowledge, experience, or position in the institution (p. 30). This view was supported through interviews with the visual art teacher educator

participants and student teacher participants and enhanced by observations of visual art teacher educator participants' relationship with their students. It was revealed that personal characteristics played important roles in establishing rapport with students and are influential in shaping perceptions of good visual art teaching. Hijas' humility and modesty enabled students to approach him without hesitation to seek specific discipline and pedagogical knowledge. He would always patiently provide guidance and constructive feedback. Hijas' personal qualities such as his passion for teaching and his desire to see his students succeed in the teaching profession earned him respect and thus created a conducive learning environment. Osman combined his witty and friendly approach to teaching and his willingness to share his skills, knowledge, and expertise to form strong personal and professional relationships. Burn's caring attitude, flexibility, accessibility and availability, coupled with his strong content knowledge and skills were seen as helpful in establishing strong relationships and respect from his students. Implicit in these characteristics were a number of assumptions related to availability. A visual art teacher educator who is not on campus, does not behave responsibly and is engaged in activities that are not directly related to his/her role as a visual art teacher educator was not looked upon favourably by colleagues or students. Although Johan was strict in his teaching practice, his friendliness was one of his virtues. His colourful life histories which he imparted through his teaching helped his students to know him better as a person although he also utilised a disciplinarian approach to enable his students to stay on track during his classes. Johan's efforts to instil critical and lateral thinking in his student teachers was seen as being very beneficial in helping them to consider various approaches to a given task.

Major themes emerged from the data consisting of personal qualities and professional qualities. The personal qualities included caring, perseverance and patience, showing enthusiasm, having a positive attitude, demonstrating creativity, dependability, and being personable. These qualities include treating students respectfully by not putting them down; showing a genuine interest in

the students as individuals; fostering relationships of equity and respect with and between students; being helpful; and encouraging students.

The professional qualities included knowing the discipline, knowing the students, being organised, incorporating constructive criticism/suggestions into teaching, and demonstrating self-evaluation and reflection. It is important to note in this study that although the visual art teacher educators have some natural personality characteristics that support their success, they also worked hard at improving their teaching and continually tried to improve their practice.

Generating and utilising local knowledge

Cheng (2001) refers to localisation as "the transfer, adaptation, and development of related values, knowledge, technology, and behavioural norms from and to the local context" (p. 42). Similar to Cochran-Smith's (2004) notion of generating and utilising local knowledge, Driscol and Carliner (2005) suggest that authentic tasks in context create a greater likelihood of learning. The ability to transform knowledge and skills from daily life requires visual art teacher educators to utilise their knowledge of the local culture and society they are working within and to contextualise this knowledge in a broader teaching context. This study showed that all participants utilise local knowledge by adapting external values, initiatives, and norms to meet the local needs of the institution, community, or society. Each of the participants suggested these particular qualities are important elements that need to be developed by every participant. Hijas endeavoured to integrate Western art educationalists' theories of art education with the Malaysian National Philosophy of Education. In his Art Education Curriculum course, Hijas would integrate McFee and Degges' (1993) theory of cultural understanding through the arts in his teaching and relate it to the Visual Art curriculum in Malaysia. This is an example of localisation where a visual art curriculum was not only respectful of its social context but was also informed by global developments

in art education.

The Situated Learning Model (Lave & Wenger, 1991) proposes that all learning is contextual and is embedded in a social and physical context. In this model visual art teacher educators can draw on situations from everyday life to illustrate the most theoretical of endeavours. Johan's teaching practice demonstrated that a student's active involvement in the learning process enhances learning, a process often referred to as active learning (Benek-Rivera & Matthews, 2004; Sarason & Banbury, 2004). His teaching involved student teachers learning by doing and he endeavoured to make them aware of the process of learning both inside and outside classroom settings. Experiences such as organising visual art workshops and a visit to an art gallery were meant to equip his students with practical and local knowledge. Hijas stated that he tried to relate his teaching to the ways art is used everyday and to consider social and cultural issues through the lens of art. To Osman and Burn, creating art should be purposeful and contribute to our understanding of the principles of visual art that are relevant to everyday life, therefore they taught art skills that were useful and practical in daily life.

In generating and utilising local knowledge, visual art teacher educator participants also believed that visual art teacher educators are the major contributors to local visual art excellence. Therefore Hijas contributed, collaborated and developed productive partnerships with many art related bodies in terms of policy and visual art curriculum development. He also provided leadership and support for colleagues through training programs for teachers as well as through community outreach programs. Hijas' position as Dean enabled him to fulfil these roles more easily. Johan preserved and acknowledged the works and contributions of local eminent artists by inviting them to discuss their work with the students. Osman established visual communication programs that include local resources, materials, and concerns of local relevance, and Burn participated in art exhibitions and provides professional consultations to corporate bodies.

Art is seen by the visual art teacher educators as one of the ways that people in different times and places communicated their perceptions, ideas, and ways of thinking. Hijas believes that art can serve as an instrument for studying cross-cultural communication—the variety of ways humans have communicated perceptions of themselves, visual experiences, past and present concepts, values, social structures, and manners. Indeed, works of art, when studied in context, can help us see other peoples' perspectives of the world. Osman for example uses graphic design to learn about his students by understanding the messages that his students try to convey. This was evidenced in a project based on his students' identity which enabled him to enact a form of cross-cultural communication with them.

As these findings suggest, the teaching of visual art includes far more than visual art teacher educators' content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge. It also includes the ability to generate and utilise local knowledge. All of the visual art teacher educator participants were aware of the increasing demand and expectation of their roles and they endeavoured to use various strategies to remain current with their discipline and to meet institutional expectations. This notion is strengthened by Eisner (2002b) who states,

> Although we tend to seek a common and certain aim for each of the various fields that populate the school's curriculum, a field's aim is determined not by the content of the field alone, but by human judgments made by reflective practitioners and policy-makers regarding the way in which a subject can be taught and the direction that learning should take. The direction that learning should take is, in turn, influenced by the population attending a school and by local circumstances of time and location. (p. 233)

The findings suggest that deep subject knowledge, an interest in developing pedagogical knowledge and good practical knowledge are necessary characteristics for visual art teacher educators who strive to achieve good

quality visual art teaching. Central to visual art teacher educators' perceptions of good visual art teaching are their prior learning experiences. All participants came to recognise that life experiences shape teaching beliefs, values, and practices. Our prior experiences as learners in school, community, and tertiary settings, as well as our current encounters with the demands and needs of institutions and students influence our teaching practice. Learning from these experiences, however, is the way in which the visual art teacher educator interprets or filters experience, and actively constructs meaning.

Findings of this study also revealed some disjuncture between the concept of good visual art teaching and actual teaching practice. This study indicated that whilst participants may espouse certain types of 'good visual art teaching' what occurs in practice may be markedly different. This finding is supported by Agyris and Schön's (1974) Theories of Action in which they differentiate between teachers' espoused theories of action and theories-in-use. Briefly, espoused theories of action are those theories "that we use to explain or justify our behaviour" (Schön 1987, p. 255). These theories are easy to articulate and could be interpreted as what teachers say about their teaching. Theories-in-use, however, are the tacit theories that underpin practice. Theories-in-use exist predominantly as tacit knowledge, knowledge we hold but cannot articulate easily. Polanyi (1966) described tacit knowledge as "a certain knowledge that [one] cannot tell" (p. 8). Espoused theories of action and theories-in-use distinguish between what people say they do and what they do. This study shows that what we say about good visual art teaching does not necessarily mean that we do or can do what we say. However it provides us with some idea of what constitutes good visual art teaching in higher education.

In this study, the disjuncture between the concept of good visual art teaching and actual teaching practice occurred in various situations. Hijas for example teaches methodology course, yet he faced a conundrum concerning his students' difficulties in understanding his teaching when he had made every effort to make the material relevant, useful, and interesting. In another situation, Johan, who is known for his punctuality was eight minutes late for

his class. Although he has the reason to be late, but his students who were late have their own reasons too.

Teacher Identity

The analysis identified three individual, yet interacting, dimensions that, taken together, form a composite of teacher identity: personal identity, professional identity and situated identity. These elements establish a useful foundation for linking the personal lives of the visual art teacher educator participants with their professional identity.

Personal identity

In this study personal identity was closely related to the visual art teacher educator participants' lives outside of higher education. This personal identity consists of various characteristics such as personal attributes, knowledge, beliefs, and values which are accumulated from life experiences. The identity could have various competing and/or complementary elements such as being male, a parent, a head of a family, a son, and/or a friend. Feedback about this identity comes from family and friends and may become a source of tension if the individual's sense of identity does not align with competing expectations or demands.

Personal attributes include commitment, integrity, enthusiasm, reliability, sense of humour, fairness, truthfulness, and adaptability. All visual art teacher educator participants demonstrated these characteristics to varying degree. Osman and Burn's ability to change their thinking and actions in order to suit different conditions or situations demonstrated their adaptability.

Personal identity also includes emotional aspects. Understanding emotion, or possessing emotional intelligence, provides visual art teacher educators with a holistic view of teaching. Even though Burn was annoyed and disappointed when one of his students stole his artwork and claimed it as his own, he

managed to empathise with the student's situation resulting in the student respecting his handling of the situation.

Professional identity

Professional identity is subject to the influence of institutional policy, ethos and practices, and social trends. It is also influenced by the teaching institution, the visual art teacher educator participants' roles and responsibilities, educational policies and government initiatives. Professional identity is also affected by factors such as class size, subject matter, the characteristics of the cohort, workload, roles and responsibilities, professional development and staff collegiality particularly in terms of feedback on teaching practice.

Situated identity

Situated identity proposed by Zimmerman (1998) works interchangeably with professional and personal identities. Either one of these professional and personal identities may, at a particular time and/or in particular scenarios, become dominant. For example, all visual art teacher educators require skills such as listening and observation, which are essential if they are to assist student teachers in articulating, refining and extending their learning. Understanding student teachers' needs and abilities, as well as their past experiences will enable visual art teacher educators to engage with student teachers as co-constructors of meaning thereby extending student teachers' capacity to use the visual arts as an imaginative and expressive form of communication.

In the observations of the participants' teaching practice, situated identity emerged when they tried to establish a positive classroom environment using either the student-centred approach and/or teacher-centred approach. Osman and Burn for example tended to use student-centred approach. They demonstrated through their practice that they were able to meet the needs of their students and they were able to create a positive and supportive classroom

climate. These teachers were also observed to use a range of techniques including questioning as a formative assessment tool, variations in groupings to ensure that students were learning at appropriate levels, cooperative group work and inquiry methods, to ensure that all styles of learning were accommodated in the classroom setting. Hijas and Johan tended to use the teacher-centred approach. These approaches can be seen as typically situational, combining both personal and professional identities. One reason that could be attributed to the choice of using this approach was due to large enrolments in Hijas' and Johan's class which were approximately 60 - 90 students as opposed the smaller class sizes of Burn (10 students) and Osman (25 students). Hence this study revealed that it is important for visual art teacher educators to understand the suitability of their teaching approaches, in conjunction with contextual factors, to ensure the effectiveness of their teaching and learning practice.

All visual art teacher educator participants believed that personal and professional lives are closely connected and that teaching involves a wide repertoire which includes personality, knowledge (both practical and content derived) and skills (both discipline specific and pedagogical). The differences are realised through each visual art teacher educator's beliefs and values and how these inform their approach. This study reveals that the visual art teacher educator participants find and maintain meaning in their work through a strong sense of personal and professional agency and moral purpose which contribute to their commitment and resilience. This research suggests that visual art teacher educator participants' perceptions of good visual art teaching were shaped by a personal identity that consisted of their personal attributes, knowledge, beliefs, and values which are accumulated from their life experiences.

In relation to the first research question, "What are visual art teacher educators' accounts of good visual art teaching practice in higher education?" all of the visual art teacher educator participants continue to develop their subject-matter knowledge and strive to ensure that their knowledge and skills are constantly

evaluated and current. All visual art teacher educator participants developed their teaching practices by reflecting on what they learned from life-experience. Although prior teaching experience is seen as an important factor, visual art teacher educator participants believe that those without extensive teaching experience can still develop their teaching skills and knowledge. They recognised that their growth as visual art teacher educators depend on their recognition that they are lifelong learners. In addition all visual art teacher educator participants view relational activity as an important element to good visual art teaching. This indicated that commitment to improving themselves through ongoing professional development is a key factor to good visual art teaching practice in higher education in Malaysia.

From the second research question, "What are visual art teacher educators' beliefs and values concerning good visual art teaching?" revealed that all visual art teacher educator participants believe that specific knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge are key factors that contribute to good visual art teaching in Malaysian higher education setting. For those visual art teacher educator participants whose education and/or current practice is studio-based, mastery of art skills and knowledge is seen to be of primary importance in good visual art teaching. For these participants good visual art teaching is a specialised area which requires specific knowledge and skills. For those participants whose education and/or current practice is theory based, good visual art teaching is not only about mastery of art skills and knowledge but also involves mastery of pedagogical content knowledge and practical knowledge. Despite these apparent differences in beliefs and practices, concern for pedagogical content knowledge is a feature of the work of all four participants. In addition, classroom management is deemed as important though it was looked at differently by all of the visual art teacher educator participants.

The third research question, "What life shaping factors inform visual art teacher educators' teaching practice?" indicated that there are many factors that inform Malaysian visual art teacher educator participants' teaching practices.

Among the factors are individual, social and cultural factors, including those pathways taken through visual art education and training. The individual factors include visual art teacher educators' personal attributes and their beliefs and values of good visual art teaching practices. These beliefs and values are closely related to Malaysian social and cultural factors which include visual art teacher educator participants' prior experiences as learners in school, community, and tertiary settings, and their understandings of the professional teaching situation. For these participants the personal and professional are connected in their lives. This connection is illustrated through the distinctive ways that each visual art teacher educator approaches their teaching and the different beliefs and values they hold. This study demonstrated congruence between participants' beliefs, values and their teaching practices and the life shaping factors that have underpinned and informed their teaching practice.

Implications and Recommendations

This study has significant implications for practice, policy, and research. The implications are detailed in the following sections.

Recommendations for visual art teacher educators

While a number of studies have addressed the relationship between beliefs, values, and teaching practice in higher education (Bain, 1998; Larsson, 1983; Murray & MacDonald, 1997; Quinlan, 1997), there are no studies investigating this phenomenon in visual art teaching practice in higher education. This research indicated that what Malaysian visual art teacher educators believe about teaching is the strongest factor influencing their visual art teaching practice. These beliefs are constructed from their personal experiences, the knowledge and experience shared with others and their personal values and ideologies. Time to think and reflect, especially in the context of peer-reviewing, has been found to be significant contributors to the development of these visual art teachers' theories about good visual art teaching and hence

their practice. Since each belief is unique and teaching is a complex profession, we need an approach to designing a program that 'educates' visual art teacher educators in the complexity of visual art teaching.

Little research has been undertaken to determine the extent to which personal characteristics influence visual art teaching practice and how personal characteristics can be developed in visual art teacher educators through professional development programs. Whilst pedagogical and content knowledge, deep understanding of learners, and the cultural contexts within which they are embedded will all continue to inform teaching practice, the importance of individual dispositions must also be acknowledged by understanding teachers' backgrounds, life histories, emotions, and well-being. Hence teacher education programs need to ensure that student visual art teacher educators reflect on their backgrounds, beliefs, values, and understandings as a means to understanding themselves as teachers (Austin, 2005).

Further research on the importance of a formalised supportive climate for visual art teacher educators is also deemed as an important aspect of this study. An extension of this concept is the opportunity for visual art teacher educators, regardless of their length of service, to access professional development opportunities. While there are a number of studies relating to the importance of professional development in a general school setting, research on the impact of professional development on visual art teacher educators in Malaysia has not been undertaken. Additionally, research focussing on the importance of the socio-cultural, historical, and political environment, and the role played by the organisation within this context needs to be addressed.

Recommendations for visual art teacher education research and practice

Rudduck, Day and Wallace (1997) state that "The neglect of the student voice is not new" (p. 74). According to these authors this voice was the piece of the missing puzzle when researchers reflected on why the educational reforms of

the 1970's seemed to be having so little impact on the quality of education. Since this study focused on visual art teacher educators, further research is needed to explore visual art student teachers' perceptions of good visual art teaching in higher education in greater depth than is possible in this study.

Further research also should extend to identifying and recognising the impact that such an understanding of good visual art teaching may have for the students and the institution. Research should focus on method, participant, and the higher education setting and be conducted within a constructivist epistemology that reflects progressive-humanistic approach. This approach recommends greater communication between teacher and students.

Rix and Twining (2007) state that "in recent years there has been increasing interest in creating diversity of educational provision to meet the full range of needs presented by learners" (p. 329). One of the interests is related to student learning acquisition, e-learning which is seen as representing an important, growing trend in the application of technology to facilitate student learning (Richardson, 2003). This study showed an attempt by at least two visual art teacher educator participants to integrate e-learning in a traditional class in a Malaysian higher education setting. Although it is not compulsory for every visual art teacher educator to employ e-learning in their teaching, this study raises important issues and provide insights about the importance of utilising internet technologies in teacher education classes. Further research might explore the perceptions of visual art teacher educators on the impact of integrating e-learning into a traditional class in a Malaysian higher education setting and its impact on learning outcomes. This could provide important insights regarding art student teachers' perceptions of e-learning and raise practical considerations for its implementation by visual art teacher educators in Malaysia. More research should be conducted to look into the strength and weaknesses of internet technologies and how best they can be used to supplement traditional classroom teaching and learning.

This research composed of all male visual art teacher educators and therefore

further research should be conducted to explore the perceptions of female visual art teacher educators and their beliefs, values, and understanding of visual art teaching. This further investigation may also reveal why there are so few female visual art teacher educators in Malaysian higher education institutions.

Collaborative teaching can take many forms, from a teaming concept (Givner & Haager, 1995; Sage, 1996) to co-teaching in a single classroom (Bauwens & Hourcade, 1991). This study has shown that the establishment of a supportive climate for collaborative learning aiming at helping visual art teacher educators achieving a sense of fellowship and learning community is an important tool to enhance visual art teaching practice. This supportive climate for collaborative learning was evident in all of the visual art teacher educator participants' strategies to enhance their learning experiences and their students' learning experiences. Burn and Osman for example invited colleagues throughout the university to watch them teaching and to provide feedback on their teaching. They also observed their colleagues in action and provided feedback for them. This is essential because through a variety of collaborative group processes, visual art teacher educators can learn to appreciate different ways of thinking and knowing, and learn to see things from different perspectives. The implementation of peer review as part of collaborative learning was based on individual visual art teacher educators' efforts to improve their teaching knowledge and skills. I would suggest that further research needs to be conducted based on the important benefits of peer reviewing for the individual and the institution and the impact of peer learning on the quality of teaching of visual art teacher educators.

Research in Malaysia has been dominated by conventional research methods in which assumptions and procedures are influenced by the natural sciences. Eisner (2002) notes, "For many, doing research in education required one to measure the phenomena investigated and then to apply statistical techniques to treat the quantified data" (p. 210). Another traditional belief is that "the aim of the research is to uncover true and objective knowledge" (p. 210) implying that

truth is independent of individual perspective, belief, and values. These traditional research beliefs have been challenged through the emergence of qualitative methodologies of which narrative inquiry is one (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. xxvi).

This study has exposed the richness that may be gained from narrative inquiry in an environment where the identification and recognition of how individuals make sense of, and give meaning to, their learning and implementing experiences in their teaching is explored. Narrative inquiry is a powerful tool for people to understand themselves through the stories they tell and for others to gain a richer understanding of their life story. The use of narrative in research into education entails taking on not only new techniques for collecting information but new perspectives.

This study explored the beliefs, values, and life shaping factors that underpinned and informed the teaching practice of four visual art teacher educators. In order to examine these, I used an approach that gave recognition to individual's narratives of good visual art teaching in a higher education setting, and to the meanings attributed by them to these accounts. Thus, a methodology that was both interpretive and constructivist was designed. The emphasis upon visual art teacher educators' stories and narratives served as a way of giving voice to particular ways of knowing and being. Goodson (2003) argues that stories particularise and make concrete our personal experiences and proposes that stories move us "into the terrain of the social, into the socially constructed nature of our experiences" (p. 29). In this study, story has provided a context for understanding the participants' beliefs, values and practices through their narrative accounts of their lives. These accounts include stories of their background, their learning experiences, their teaching experiences, their visual art teaching theories, philosophies, and practices, their beliefs and values concerning what good visual art teaching in higher education looks like, and those factors that they consider have shaped their teaching practice.

The presentation of the narrative accounts, written in a 'story form' endeavoured to capture the attention of readers by providing stimulating accounts of the participants' lives and experiences. This story telling format was aimed at enabling readers to engage imaginatively with the lives of the participants. The stories were not presented merely for enjoyment but were systematically constructed by analysing, interpreting, and presenting past events to better understand the participants and their visual art teaching practice. On reflection we might draw lessons from these narrative accounts in order to inform our understanding of these visual art teacher educators' perceptions of good teaching in a Malaysian higher education setting.

The presentation of narratives of four visual art teacher educators' voices supported by 12 student teachers' voices serves to provide insights into perceptions of good visual art teaching in a higher education setting. In the context of educational research in Malaysia the use of narrative inquiry to research the works and lives of visual art teacher educators in a Malaysian higher education setting is innovative. This study therefore provides valuable information in relation to educational research in Malaysia.

Conclusion

This study suggests that there are commonalities and differences between each of the visual art teacher educator participants and their perceptions of good visual art teaching. I wish to stress that although I have made comparisons of commonalities and differences between my participants, it was not my intention to make generalisations but to understand the uniqueness and diversity of each participant. Each visual art teacher educator approaches their teaching in a personal way and through this approach emphasises different aspects in their teaching to that of others. This thesis does not aim to look for a 'truth' but rather to uncover meanings attached to the stories provided by the participants and what it meant to them. From the narrative accounts, we might also understand why different visual art teacher educators have different

perceptions of what constitutes good visual art teaching in higher education.

This study has shown that life experiences shape teaching beliefs, values, and practices. Teaching is shaped by our prior experiences as learners in school, tertiary settings, and the community, and, our understanding of the professional teaching situation. All participants believe that the personal and professional are connected in their lives and that teaching involves a wide spectrum of skills and expertise. The differences are that each visual art teacher educator has his own way of approaching their teaching and is informed and influenced by different beliefs and values.

This study has provided some insight into the complexity of good visual art teaching by viewing the phenomenon from the perspective of four visual art teacher educators. This study has developed ways to listen to visual art teacher educators' voices and to hear them in their own terms, to observe them, to enter their realities, and to see the world from their perspectives. This is deemed as important because in the Malaysian experience, more often than not, visual art teacher educators' teaching practice and their lives have been largely unexamined. The worldviews, stories, and teaching practices they enact are cultural constructions that have become part of the fabric of their everyday lives. Through this study an understanding of the beliefs, values and life-shaping factors that underpin and inform these visual art teacher educators' work provides us with new understandings of their work and visual art practices in Malaysian teacher education.

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APPENDIXES

Tasmania
DEPARTMENT of HEALTH and HUMAN SERVICES

UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (TASMANIA) NETWORK

MINIMAL RISK APPLICATION APPROVAL

11 May 2005

AssocProf Margaret Barrett
Education
Private Bag 1307
Launceston

H8343:
What does quality art teaching look like? A case study of perceptions of art teaching in a Malaysian higher education setting.

Dear AssocProf Barrett

Acting on a mandate from the Tasmania Social Sciences HREC, the Chair of the committee considered and approved the above project on 10 May 2005.

All committees operating under the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network are registered and required to comply with the *National Statement on the Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans 1999* (NHMRC guidelines).

Therefore, the Chief Investigator's responsibility is to ensure that:

1) All researchers listed on the application comply with HREC approved application.
2) Modifications to the application do not proceed until approval is obtained in writing from the HREC.
3) The confidentiality and anonymity of all research subjects is maintained at all times, except as required by law.
4) Clause 2.37 of the *National Statement* states:
   An HREC shall, as a condition of approval of each protocol, require that researchers immediately report anything which might warrant review of ethical approval of the protocol, including:
   a) *Serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants;*
   b) *Proposed changes in the application; and*
   c) *Unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.*

   The report must be lodged within 24 hours of the event to the Ethics Executive Officer who will report to the Chairs.

Research & Development Office, University of Tasmania, Private Bag 1, Hobart Tas 7001
Phone: 03 6226 2763 Fax: 03 6226 2765 Email: Amanda.McAully@utas.edu.au

5) All participants must be provided with the current Information Sheet and Consent form as approved by the Ethics Committee.

6) The Committee is notified if any investigators are added to, or cease involvement with, the project.

7) This study has approval for four years contingent upon annual review. An *Annual Report* is to be provided on the anniversary date of your approval. Your first report is due 10 May 2006. You will be sent a courtesy reminder by email closer to this due date.
Clause 2.35 of the National Statement states;
As a minimum an HREC must require at regular periods, at least annually, reports from principal researchers on matters including:
   a) *Progress to date or outcome in case of completed research;*
   b) *Maintenance and security of records;*
   c) *Compliance with the approved protocol, and*
   d) *Compliance with any conditions of approval.*

8) A *Final Report* and a copy of the published material, either in full or abstract, must be provided at the end of project.

Yours sincerely

M. Knott

for Amanda McAully
(Executive Officer)

Research & Development Office, University of Tasmania, Private Bag 1, Hobart Tas 7001
Phone: 03 6226 2763 Fax: 03 6226 2765 Email: Amanda.McAully@utas.edu.au

APPENDIX B

UNIT PERANCANG EKONOMI
Economic Planning Unit
JABATAN PERDANA MENTERI
Prime Minister's Department
BLOK B5 & B6,
PUSAT PENTADBIRAN KERAJAAN PERSEKUTUAN
62502 PUTRAJAYA
MALAYSIA

Telefon: 603-8888333.
Fax: 603-88883798

Ruj.Tuan:
Your Ref.:
Ruj. Kami: UPE: 40/200/19/1388
Our Ref.:
Tarikh:
Date: 11 November 2005

Md. Nasir Ibrahim
55 Guy Street
Kings Meadows
Tasmania 7249
AUSTRALIA

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN MALAYSIA

With reference to your application dated 15 August 2005, I am pleased to inform you that your application to conduct research in Malaysia has been approved by the Research Promotion and Co-Ordination Committee, Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department. The details of the approval are as follows:

Researcher's name	:	MD. NASIR IBRAHIM
Passport No. / I. C No	:	600801-01-6045
Nationality	:	MALAYSIA
Title of Research		WHAT DOES QUALITY ART TEACHING LOOK LIKE? A CASE STUDY OF PERCEPTIONS OF ART TEACHING IN A MALAYSIAN HIGHER EDUCATION SETTING
Period of Research Approved	:	ONE YEAR

2. Please collect your Research Pass in person from the Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department, Parcel B, Level 4 Block B5, Federal Government Administrative Centre, 62502 Putrajaya and bring along two (2) passport size photographs. You also required to comply with the rules and regulations stipulated from time to time by the agencies with which you have dealings in the conduct of your research.

3. I would like to draw your attention to the undertaking signed by you that you will submit without cost to the Economic Planning Unit the following documents:

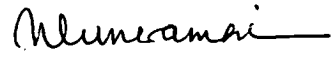
a) A brief summary of your research findings on completion of your research and before you leave Malaysia; and

b) Three (3) copies of your final dissertation/publication.

4. Lastly, please submit a copy of your preliminary and final report directly to the State Government where you carried out your research.

ATTENTION
This letter is only to inform you the status of your application and cannot be used as a research pass.

Thank you.
Yours sincerely,



(MUNIRAH ABD. MANAN)
b.p. Ketua Pengarah,
Unit Perancang Ekonomi,
(Seksyen Ekonomi Makro)
Email: munirah@epu.jpm.my
Tel: 88882809/2818/2827

C.c:
Ketua Setiausaha, Kementerian Pengajian Tinggi, Aras 7, Blok E3, Parcel E,
Pusat Pentadbiran Kerajaan Persekutuan,
62505 Putrajaya.
(u.p: Dr. Hj. Mohammad Naim Yaacub) (Ruj. Tuan: KPT(BPDP)/038/01/10(31)

Pengarah
Pusat Pengurusan Penyelidikan
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
43600 UKM, Bangi Selangor
(u.p: Prof. Dr. Mohd Yusof Hj. Othman)

UNIVERSITY
OF TASMANIA

16 March 2005

What does quality art teaching look like? A case study of perceptions of art teaching in a Malaysian higher education setting.

Md. Nasir Ibrahim

Dear (teacher educator),

We would like to invite you to participate in the study; ***What does quality art teaching look like? A case study of perceptions of art teaching in a Malaysian higher education setting.*** This study aims to:

- explore quality art teaching from the perspectives of teacher educators and student teachers
- elicit participants' perceptions of their beliefs, values, and practices of their teaching and learning experiences in art education in a higher education setting.
- interrogate the relationship between theories, beliefs, and values, and teaching and learning practices.

You are being invited to participate because your view as a teacher educator is central to this study and your participation will provide you with the opportunity to express an opinion and have it used to inform the study. You have been identified as a possible participant by the Faculty of Arts, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris' administrator. Please note that this contact is being made through the faculty and I have not been given access to any private contact information. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without effect or explanation. Should you wish you may also withdraw any data supplied.

If you agree to participate, you will be interviewed on three separate occasions, and your teaching observed on one occasion. The interviews will be conducted over a period of three weeks (one per week), and will take approximately one hour each, and be conducted at a time and place that is mutually convenient. The first interview shall gather your history, beliefs and values in relation to art teaching and learning. Prior to the first interview being conducted, you will be provided with an outline of the questions that will be addressed in the interview. The second interview will concentrate on the 'concrete details' of your descriptions of your current practice in art teaching and attendant beliefs and values. This interview will be conducted prior to classroom observations of your teaching. The third interview is a follow-up discussion that aims to clarify issues raised in previous interviews and the observation. It is meant to encourage you to reflect further on your beliefs, values and practices; specifically on the relationship between art teaching and learning. Audio-recordings will be made of these interviews to assist in accurate transcription of verbal data. These recording will not be used for any purpose other than transcription. Through these interviews your perceptions of the nature of teaching and learning art in the organization will be explored.

The focus of the observation is to record your teaching strategies and approaches, pedagogy, and teacher-student interactions in order to inform interview data and to provide a richer view of your theories and beliefs as they are embedded in practice. Observations will be video recorded from a fixed-point video camera focused on you.

You may feel uncomfortable or embarrassed during the interview process and if this happens you may leave the interview at any point and if necessary may remove yourself and any data contributed to the study at any time. You may also feel uncomfortable or embarrassed during the video-observation process. If this occurs you may request that the video observation cease and if necessary may remove yourself and any observation data contributed to the study at any time. To protect your anonymity all tapes (audio and video) will be labeled using pseudonyms (as chosen by you). Any names (of people, organizations and geographical areas) mentioned will be coded (given pseudonyms) during the transcription process. A pseudonym will be used for Faculty of Arts, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris in any output of the study. All data (audio-tape and video-tape) will be kept in a locked filing cabinet at the University of Tasmania for a five-year period after which it will be destroyed. Cross-references from pseudonyms to real names will be kept in a password-protected file on a secure file server at the University of Tasmania.

Transcript of the interviews will be made available to you to ensure that it is a faithful account of the interview and the views expressed. You may edit or withdraw content from the transcript that you contributed during this process.

For further information about this project you may contact Md. Nasir Ibrahim, 0437104028 **mibrahim@postoffice.utas.edu.au** or Associate Prof. Margaret Barrett, +61 3 63243248 **Margaret.Barrett@utas.edu.au.** You may indicate your consent to participate in the study by signing the attached consent form and returning it in the enclosed post-paid pre-addressed envelope. Alternatively, you may fax the form to Md. Nasir Ibrahim (+61 3 63243048).

This project has received ethical approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network. If you have any concerns of an ethical nature or complaints about the manner in which the project is conducted, you may contact the Executive Officer of the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network (Amanda McAully 6226 2763). The Executive Officer can direct participants to the relevant Chair who reviewed the research.

You will be given a copy of this information sheet and the statement of informed consent to keep.

Yours Sincerely,

Md. Nasir Ibrahim
Investigator

Associate Professor Margaret Barrett
Supervisor (Chief investigator)

CONSENT FORM (Teacher Educator)

What does good visual art teaching look like? A case study of perceptions of art teaching in a Malaysian higher education setting.

1. I have read and understood the 'Information Sheet' for this study.
2. The nature and possible effects of the study have been explained to me.
3. I understand that the study involves the following procedure:
   an audio-taped interview for approximately one hour concerning my perceptions of the teaching and learning art practices in higher education settings. I understand that the transcript of the interview will be made available to me for review.
4. I understand that the following risks are involved: I may feel embarrassed or uncomfortable during the interview.
5. I understand that all research data will be securely stored on the University of Tasmania premises for a period of 5 years. The data will be destroyed at the end of 5 years.
6. Any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
7. I agree that research data gathered for the study may be published (provided that I cannot be identified as a participant).
8. I understand that my identity will be kept confidential and that any information I supply to the researcher will be used only for the purposes of the research.
9. I agree to my participation in this investigation and understand that I may withdraw at any time without any effect, and if I so wish, may request that any data supplied to date be withdrawn from the research.

   Name of Participant:_____

   Signature of Participant:_____ Date:_____

10. I have explained this project and the implications of participation in it to this volunteer and I believe that the consent is informed and that he/she understands the implications of participation.

    Name of investigator: Md. Nasir Ibrahim

    Signature of Investigator:_____ Date: _____

UNIVERSITY
OF TASMANIA

16 March 2005

What does good visual art teaching look like?
A case study of perceptions of art teaching in a Malaysian higher education setting.
Md. Nasir Ibrahim

Dear (Student teacher),

I would like to invite you to participate in the study; ***What does good visual art teaching look like? A case study of perceptions of art teaching in a Malaysian higher education setting.*** This study aims to:

- explore good visual art teaching from the perspectives of teacher educators and student teachers at the Faculty of Arts in Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris.
- elicit the participants' perceptions of their beliefs, values, and practices of their teaching and learning experiences in art education in a higher education setting.
- interrogate the relationship between theories, beliefs, and values, and teaching and learning practices.

You are being invited to participate because your view as a student teacher is central to this study and your participation will provide you with the opportunity to express an opinion and have it used to inform the study. You have been identified as a possible participant by the Faculty of Arts, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris' administrator. Please note that this contact is being made through the faculty and I have not been given access to any private contact information. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without effect or explanation. Should you wish you may also withdraw any data supplied.

If you agree to your participation, you will be interviewed in a group of six for approximately one hour at a time and place that is mutually convenient for you and the other participants. I will conduct the interview. Audio-recordings will be made of these interviews to assist in accurate transcription of verbal data. These audios will not be used for any purpose other than transcription. Through these interviews your perceptions of: the nature of teaching and learning art in the organization will be explored. This will relate to your understandings, values, and beliefs of quality art teaching.

You are also asked to participate in an individual interview. This interview will take approximately one hour and will occur one month after the group interview at a time and place that is mutually convenient. This interview aims to provide a perspective independent of that offered in the group context. The intention of these interviews is to enrich the data obtained from the group interview. It allows you to expand on your perceptions of the topics discussed in the group interview.

You may feel uncomfortable or embarrassed during the interview process (group and/or individual). If this happens you may leave the group interview. You may stop the individual interview at any point and if necessary you may remove any data contributed to the study at any time. To protect your anonymity all tapes will be labeled using pseudonyms (as chosen by you). Any names (of people, organizations and geographical areas) mentioned will be coded (given pseudonyms) during the transcription process. A pseudonym will be used for Faculty of Arts, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris in any output of the study. All data (audio-tape) will be kept in a locked filing cabinet at the University of Tasmania for a five-year period after which it will be destroyed. Cross-references from pseudonyms to real names will be kept in a password-protected file on a secure file server at the University of Tasmania. While I will do everything possible to ensure your anonymity and the confidentiality of your data, I cannot ensure that other members of the group will respect this. You and all other participants are reminded that all issues discussed during the group interviews are confidential to the group and should not be divulged to any other individual.

Transcript of the interviews will be made available to you to ensure that it is a faithful account of the interview and the views expressed. You may edit or withdraw content from the transcript that you contributed during this process.

For further information about this project you may contact Md. Nasir Ibrahim, 0437104028 mibrahim@postoffice.utas.edu.au or Associate Prof. Margaret Barrett, (+61 3 63243248) Margaret.Barrett@utas.edu.au. You may indicate your consent to participate in the study by signing the attached consent form and returning it in the enclosed post-paid pre-addressed envelope. Alternatively, you may fax the form to Md. Nasir Ibrahim (+61 3 63243048).

This project has received ethical approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network. If you have any concerns of an ethical nature or complaints about the manner in which the project is conducted, you may contact the Executive Officer of the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network (Amanda McAully 6226 2763). The Executive Officer can direct participants to the relevant Chair who reviewed the research.

You will be given a copy of this information sheet and the statement of informed consent to keep.

Yours Sincerely

Md. Nasir Ibrahim
Investigator

Associate Professor Margaret Barrett
Supervisor / Chief investigator

CONSENT FORM (Student Teacher)

What does good visual art teaching look like? A case study of perceptions of art teaching in a Malaysian higher education setting.

1. I have read and understood the 'Information Sheet' for this study.
2. The nature and possible effects of the study have been explained to me.
3. I understand that the study involves the following procedure:
   an audio-taped interview for approximately one hour concerning my perceptions of the teaching and learning art practices in higher education settings. I understand that the transcript of the interview will be made available to me for review.
4. I understand that the following risks are involved: I may feel embarrassed or uncomfortable during the interview.
5. I understand that all research data will be securely stored on the University of Tasmania premises for a period of 5 years. The data will be destroyed at the end of 5 years.
6. Any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
7. I agree that research data gathered for the study may be published (provided that I cannot be identified as a participant).
8. I understand that my identity will be kept confidential and that any information I supply to the researcher will be used only for the purposes of the research.
9. I agree to my participation in this investigation and understand that I may withdraw at any time without any effect, and if I so wish, may request that any data supplied to date be withdrawn from the research.

   Name of Participant:_____

   Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

10. I have explained this project and the implications of participation in it to this volunteer and I believe that the consent is informed and that he/she understands the implications of participation.

    Name of investigator: Md. Nasir Ibrahim

    Signature of Investigator: _____ Date: _____

INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

This plan relates to the individual interview for visual art teacher educators. The researcher will employ a three-stage interview model put forward by Seidman (1998). The visual art teacher educators will be interviewed on three occasions. For each visual art teacher educator, questions relating to his/her understandings, values, and beliefs AND stated practices of quality visual art teaching will be designed. This initial interview schedules will be a semi-structured interview and may involve additional questions if the needs arise to elicit greater detail in regard to a specific topic.

The first interview

The first interview is meant to gather visual art teacher educators' history, belief, and values. It is 'to put the participants' experiences in context by asking them to tell as much as possible about themselves in light of the topic up to the present time' (Seidman, 1998, p. 11).

Structure of sessions for visual art teacher educators:

Part 1: 10 minute "warm-up" - History

1. Please tell me about your background such as place of birth, date of birth, and your family.
2. Tell me about your school lives, and learning experiences.
3. What are your qualifications and in which area of specialization? How is it related to art and teaching?
4. Where and when did you obtain your degrees?
5. What do you recall of your learning experiences in tertiary education?
6. How do these learning experiences relate to your present career?
7. What is your most powerful memory (negative/positive) of your teacher

education course? Please describe.

8. Since completing your degree, describe your work history.
9. Why did you decide to become a visual art teacher educator?
10. How many years have you been teaching and in which setting, i.e. school or higher education settings?
11. How did you feel about teaching and what are the best aspects?
12. How would you describe the experience of being a visual art teacher educator in your current workplace?
13. Could you explain about the kind of program you run?
14. How have these experiences shaped your studio/classroom teaching practices?

Part 2: 25 minutes—Pre-teaching issues

For this part of the interview, non-directive questions will be asked in order to establish wide range of meanings, interpretations and experiences.

1. What are the factors that contributed to your understanding of visual art teaching?
2. In what ways have your past experience helped in your teaching and learning of visual art education to prospective teachers?
3. From your observation of visual art education in schools,
    a. What approaches to art education are apparent?
    b. What are the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches?
    c. Would you describe your academic workload?
4. Considering your workload, what are the challenges?
    a. Professionally?
    b. Personally?
5. Are you professionally prepared for all aspects of your teaching workload? Please describe/explain.
6. What do you think scholarship of teaching is?
7. Think of a time when you or someone demonstrated scholarship in their teaching. What did this look like?
8. Tell me a story that happened in your teaching career about:
    a. a good teaching experience
    b. a bad teaching experience

c. what motivates you; and

d. what de-motivates you."

Part 3: 20 minutes – Beliefs and Values

1. What do you understand by art education?
2. What constitutes good visual art teaching?
3. What is the purpose of visual art education in our society?
4. What teaching and learning strategies support this?
5. How does visual art teaching and learning in higher education settings differ from school settings?
6. How does quality assurance relate to your visual art teaching?
7. How do you describe your teaching and the student learning outcomes?
8. What factors inform your teaching planning?
9. What do you do to improve your teaching?
10. What are your expectations of students and their participation? How do you communicate these expectations?
11. Describe your working relationship with your colleagues? How does this impact on your teaching?
12. Describe the ways in which you work with the community? How does this impact on your teaching?
13. Describe the ways in which you work with government initiatives and directives? How does this impact on your teaching?
14. What are your aims in visual art education?
15. Describe an episode of good visual art teaching in your education.
16. Describe an episode of good visual art teaching in a school.
17. Describe an episode of good visual art teaching in a higher education setting.
18. For you, what do you consider the best way of teaching visual art? Why do you think this is so?
19. How would you describe the different demands on you pertaining to scholarship of teaching?
20. What else would you like to add about your beliefs and values regarding good visual art teaching?

Conclusion - 5 mins

Briefly review main points in the view of participants. Thank participant.

The second interview

The second interview will be held before the observations and will concentrate on the 'concrete details' (Seidman, 1998, p. 12) of the visual art teacher educators' present experiences and data detailing the perceptions of visual art teacher educators' theories and beliefs in good visual art teaching.

Structure of sessions for visual art teacher educators:

Part 1: 5 minute "warm-up" – Recalling the first interview

"In our previous interview, we have discussed about your history, beliefs, and values pertaining to your visual art teaching. Is there anything that you wish to add or change?"

Part 2: 25 minutes—Teaching issues

For this part of the interview, non-directive questions will be asked in order to establish wide range of meanings, interpretations and experiences.

1. How important is it to you to know your students well?
    a. In terms of their art skill
    b. In terms of their cognitive abilities
    c. In terms of their emotive abilities
    d. In terms of their personality
    e. In terms of their history
2. Please describe how you rely on routines as part of your teaching?
    a. Preparing a lesson
    b. Beginning a lesson
    c. Ending a lesson
    d. Classroom management
3. I would like to discuss how you feel about visual art teaching.
    a. What are the most rewarding aspects?
    b. What are the most challenging aspects?

4. How would you describe the different demands on you for planning to teach for a discipline in which you were trained compared to an area in which you were not trained?

Part 3: 20 minutes – Visual art teaching beliefs and values

1. Could you discuss your view on visual art education and what role does it play in our lives?
2. What do you understand by visual art teaching?
3. How does visual art teaching in higher education settings differ from school settings?
4. How do you describe your teaching and the aims and purposes of visual art education?
5. What does good planning look like? What makes you think so?
6. How does good planning relate to practice?
7. How do you differentiate between fine art and art education?

Conclusion - 5 mins

Briefly review main points in the view of participants. Thank participant.

The third interview

The third interview is follow-up discussions to clarify queries raised by observation data.

Structure of sessions for visual art teacher educators:

Part 1: 10 minute "warm-up" - History

1. During the observation, I noticed that you.....Could you please explain?
2. What else that you like to add about your beliefs and values on quality visual art teaching?

Conclusion - 5 mins

Briefly review main points in the view of participants. Thank participant.

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

Now that you've read through the information letter, and we've signed the consent form, I'd like to thank you for taking part in this study. I'll begin by asking...

Part 1: 5 minute "warm-up"

1. Why did you decide to become a teacher?
2. What do you recall of your learning experiences in teacher education?
3. What is your most powerful memory (negative/positive) of your teacher education course?
4. How do these learning experiences shape your teaching practices?

Part 2: 25 minutes—Pre-teaching issues

For this part of the interview, non-directive questions will be asked in order to establish wide range of meanings, interpretations and experiences.

1. What are the factors that contributed to your understanding of visual art teaching?
2. From your observation of visual art teaching in schools,
    a. what approaches to art education are apparent?
    b. what are the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches?
3. I would like to discuss how you feel about visual art teaching.
    a. What are the most rewarding aspects?
    b. What are the most challenging aspects?
4. Would you describe your learning workload? (Studio-based, discipline-based, co-curriculum, community outreach, other)
5. Are you professionally prepared for all aspects of your visual art teaching? Please describe/explain.
6. What do you think scholarship of teaching is?
7. Think of a time when you or someone demonstrated scholarship in their teaching. What did this look like?
8. Describe the type of relationship you have developed with your lecturers.

9. How important is it to you to know your lecturers well:
    a. in terms of their teaching skills
    b. in terms of their cognitive abilities
    c. in terms of their emotive abilities
    d. in terms of their personality
    e. in terms of their history
10. What is your understanding of your lecturers' teaching style?
11. What approach do your lecturers employ in their teaching?
12. What are your lecturers teaching methodologies that you deemed as influential?
13. Does the lecturer start a course by informing the students plainly, methodically, and accurately what the students need to learn?
14. What do you think of the most acceptable way of teaching art at the tertiary settings?
15. Does the lecturer teach according to what he or she preaches?
16. Is every task requirement clear?
17. Does your lecturer give the impression that he/she haven't anything to learn from students?
18. Does the visual art teacher educator show real interest in what students have to say?
19. Does the visual art teacher educator make real effort to understand difficulties students may be having with their work?
20. Does the visual art teacher educator work hard to make his/her subject interesting to students?
21. Are you given a chance to discuss with your lecturer how you are going to learn in the course?
22. Describe your most difficult situations in learning.
23. Is the content of teaching relevant to the course?
24. In what ways do you think the course could be improved?
25. What is your attitude towards your lecturers' reporting and assessing method?
26. Describe an episode of good visual art teaching during your study.
27. Describe an episode of good visual art teaching during your study.

Part 3: 20-30 minutes—Beliefs and values

1. What do you understand by visual art education?
2. What constitutes good visual art teaching?
3. What teaching and learning strategies support this?
4. How does visual art teaching and learning in higher education settings differ from school settings?
5. How do you describe your teaching and the student learning outcomes?
6. What are your expectations of your visual art teacher educators?
7. How do you communicate these expectations?
8. For you, what do you consider the best way of teaching art? Why do you think so?
9. What else would you like to add about your beliefs and values regarding good visual art teaching in higher education?

Conclusion - 5 mins

Briefly review main points in the view of participants.

ONE-OFF STUDENT TEACHERS'
INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW

Introduction: It's now some [state number of weeks] weeks since you participated in the group interview; I'd like to discuss any lasting impressions of the interview. I'll begin by asking...

1. From your experience, what does good visual art teaching in higher education look like? Would you describe a specific instance?
2. What are the factors that contributed to your understanding of good visual art teaching?
3. Are you professionally prepared for all aspects of your visual art teaching? Please describe/explain.
4. Do your visual art teacher educators have adequate visual art knowledge and skills?
5. Does the visual art teacher educator try to establish good relationship with his or her students?
6. Does the visual art teacher educator work hard to make his/her subject interesting to students?
7. Are you given a chance to discuss with your lecturer how you are going to learn in the course?
8. Describe your most difficult situations in learning.
9. For you, what do you consider the best way of teaching art? Why do you think so?
10. What else would you like to add about your beliefs and values regarding good visual art teaching in higher education?

Conclusion - 5 mins

Briefly review main points in the view of participants.

Close I'd like to thank you for your participation in this interview.